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Spiritual Culture and Social Service

Spiritual Culture and Social Service

By
CHARLES S. MACFARLAND
Secretary, The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America

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In Affectionate Remembrance

To the people of Maverick Chapel, East Boston, Massachusetts, the Home Mission where I began my ministry; the Congregational Church in the little village of Bethany, Connecticut, where I was ordained; the Maplewood Congregational Church of Malden, Massachusetts, where I had six years of joyous service; and the First Congregational Church of South Norwalk, Connecticut, where, in a democratic, industrial community, I was trained for my present work

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Foreword

UPON making the interchange of the work of the local pastorate for that of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and its Social Service Commission, it seems appropriate that the writer should attempt to order and set forth his thought upon the relation between religious devotion and humanitarian impulse; spiritual conservation and moral passion. This book consists of recent utterances in which the author has sought, in guiding the thought of his congregations, to set before them the sympathetic unity and essential identity of spiritual culture and social service.

Lest the first section of the book, entitled "The Pattern in the Mount," should seem partial and inadequate, the reader is reminded that this is in no sense an attempt to give commensurate treatment to the person of Christ, but simply to portray the Master as the living historic example for human life and service and of the noble spirit in which that service should be rendered.

In his earlier devotional, theological and exegetical books, "The Spirit Christlike," "The Infinite Affection" and "Jesus and the Prophets,"

the author has attempted to interpret Jesus of Nazareth the Son of Man as Jesus the Christ the Son of God, especially in the chapters of "The Spirit Christlike" entitled "God With Us," "God Within Us," "The Universal Incarnation," and in "The Infinite Affection," the sections on "The Person of Christ" and "The Sovereignty of Christ." These former utterances are the essential background and suggest the enduring impulse of his social creed and faith.

"The reverent man who seeks, as men will seek, and ought to seek, an adequate interpretation of Jesus to the intellect—be at the same time his heart and motive pure—will find himself lifted beyond the humanity in which he stands, will find himself upon the height of Tabor, gazing at a countenance transfigured before him, at a face which shines as the sun, at garments white as the light; while the cloud of divine glory overshadows him, and in his ears resounds the voice, 'This is My beloved Son: Hear ye Him.' The solitary, perfect, moral human light of these two thousand years is clouded with ambiguous shadows, the nature of the Infinite unknown, the faith of men and all their moral life uncertain, the goal of their achievement is unsure, and the whole present scheme of human progress fails, unless, with an authority that is divine, with an ideal that is the form of God, Jesus Christ is God with us.

"To apprehend the moral magnitude and contemplate the spiritual force of Jesus is the solitarily supreme desire of the mind of man, and to appropriate His life the loftiest endeavour of a human soul. In Him the Infinite is reachable to human contemplation. He is God with us. Through Him attainable to human aspiration, He is God within us. The Son of God, the witness and the earnest of the heavenly childhood of the race, He is the sovereign possession of mankind.

"The person, then, of Jesus calls for the homage of the race. He is an eternal contrast to the human life to which He came and comes. The difference between His sinlessness and human sin is an eternal moral contrast. Against the sombre background of our darkened human lives the perfection of His spirit is as the sun at night. His exhaustless person calls for a supereminent, unique distinction. His eternal contrast between sinlessness and sin is the eternal contrast between God and man, and when men bow the knee to Jesus Christ they worship and adore the God whom He ineffably reveals.

"The spiritual consciousness of Christ is the eternally enduring object of the minds and hearts of men. Thus, in Him was introduced into the world, not merely a new decalogue, not only a restored prophetism, but an absolutely new order of life. The better moral, spiritual order of the

world, so far as it is better, is simply the light of Calvary on human life. Any better life, any finer vision, to be realized in any sphere or time within the moral order, will come, and can come, only by the yielding of the hearts of men, and of the constitutions of human institutions, to the sovereignty of Christ.

"'But I say unto you.' His word has never been transcended. The true apprehension of Jesus is not in the utterances of the Sermon on the Mount, but in the mysterious scene upon the mountain of transfiguration. 'This is My Son . . . hear ye Him.' It is the eternal voice from heaven to the race to-day. The vision and voice must both be seen and heard. This is the order of Christian evidence; he who spiritually apprehends the person will be mysteriously, solemnly commanded by the utterance. The order of experience will be both the mount of vision and the Sermon on the Mount. To those who see the vision, the voice will be the sovereign compulsion of human thought and life. This is the world's deepest need to-day and the sole solution of its profoundest problems. To serious, thoughtful men its problems are serious and sometimes dreadful. Without the help of God an earnest-minded man would not be able to bear the weight of his own heavy heart. Without the light of Christ the shadows of human life would be impenetrable.

"Jesus' most significant method we have yet to see. While His words relate to bodies of men who have come together under the natural associations of human interests, His words are also spoken directly to the individual. He realizes that both the social and the industrial order are made up of men and women. So He went about to men and women. He said most of His profoundest words to but twelve men. Yet witness the realization of His prophecy, fulfilling itself for now twenty centuries, that they should be the salt and leaven of the earth. The supreme question of human life is that of the personal relation of the individual to Christ. Who, in these two thousand years, have done the most to bring men to His feet? The framers of the creeds? They have done much, and yet 'Their little systems' had 'their day; they' had 'their day and ceased to be.' The theorists of social reform? They have done much, but it has been fragmentary and transient. In the industrial order, the organizations of labour? No doubt they have accomplished a great deal for the uplifting of men. But more, infinitely more, has come from the perennial power of simple personalities who have been constantly shedding Christ's spirit about them. Jesus saw these same dreadful problems. They were worse in His day. He met them by sending out twelve disciples. He is meeting them to-day in the same way.

The sole hope of the world is to make men disciples of Jesus. He is waiting, as His parents waited in the inn, to find room in the social and industrial realms of life. He finds room as men get Him in their hearts.

"The solution of all human problems is the answer of religion. There is no religion known to man higher than our Christian faith. The solemn questions of society, the serious conditions of industry, with its bitterness and hate, simply await the second coming of the Son of man through His disciples. The world to-day is full of Bethesda pools and of men waiting for a Christ in the form of a disciple to help them in. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until men shall see the vision of Mount Hermon and hear the voice of the Sermon on the Mount.

"'O Saul! it shall be
A Face like My face that receives thee; a man like to Me
Thou shalt love and be loved by forever.
A Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee,
See the Christ stand!'

"There is no other name, no other name, given under heaven or among men, whereby the world can be saved. And the sovereignty of Jesus Christ is the simple reign of human love. 'But I say unto you;' 'While He was yet speaking . . . behold, a voice out of the

cloud' said, 'This is My beloved Son . . . hear ye Him.'

"The Gospel is outgrown, the Christian pulpit is superfluous, the Church of Christ goes out of existence, when the truths of the Gospel, the vocabulary of the pulpit, and the constitution of the Church do not contain the words *God*, *sin*, *judgment* and *redemption*. We need, in this heedless generation, to be first of all Isaiahs, Jeremiahs, Malachis, Amoses, Hoseas, to prepare the way for Jesus Christ. The voice of the prophet is stilled in the land. We need to become John the Baptists forerunning the Redeemer, with the stern raiment of camel's hair, with strong leathern girdles about our loins, preaching in a wilderness of religious indifference, and saying, 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,' that men may come and be baptized of us, confessing their sins. We must be more than John the Baptists. But we cannot be more than John the Baptists until we have been John the Baptists. Then, on the morrow, looking upon the transcendent form of the Son of God, revealing so ineffably the Father's character and will and love, we shall, with the joy of the Gospel making our voices to tremble in the transformation of the message, point suppliant and confessing sinners to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

The problems of the social order are pressing and momentous. We should be solemnly and joyously conscious that we hold the key to the situation in the Gospel of our Master. There can be no social redemption without divine regeneration. Behind and permeating our social science we need a great theology and a spacious Christology, as the sovereign requisites of our social faith. We must not forget that we are charged with spiritual destinies and that the commission of the Church is to save men; that we must never deal simply with material conditions and neglect character, or relieve misery while we ignore sin. The kingdom of heaven is more than an economic state of equilibrium. To resolve man's moral and spiritual life into an economic program would be calamitous and sad. It would leave men in the very treadmill and grind of the human life from which they seek escape. This, however, is not to say that spiritual and material things are unrelated. Perhaps the question is, shall we make our economic order the expression of our moral and spiritual principles and shall we make our moral and spiritual life the ideal and the end of that economic order?

We can never have Jesus' Brotherhood of Man until we gain the sense of His Fatherhood of God. We can have no kingdom of heaven on earth until our economic programs are fashioned

in the light of spiritual ideals and with spiritual ends in view. Above us shines the Star of Bethlehem, the light of all our human hopes, and if we follow it, we find it standing over the cradle of the infant Christ. Thus, the search for all our human ideals ends in Jesus. The world will come together in the consummation of sympathy, tenderness, brotherhood, when all men are brought to sit together at the feet of Christ.

The Christian Church has the threefold vocation of conscience, interpreter and guide of all social movements. She should determine what their motive and conscience should be, inspire them with that motive and impose that conscience upon them. She should interpret their inner and ultimate meaning. Then, with a powerful hand and mind and heart, guide them towards their spiritual ends. The task of the Church is to transform a chaotic democracy into an ordered kingdom of heaven.

As we look out upon the social order, upon the great ocean of democracy, with its waves and billows, but also with its splendid, wide horizon, the Church may hear the call of the Master to those who, in these latter days, have toiled and taken nothing, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets." In the burning, fiery furnace, heated seven times hot, if we witness with clear vision, we see the fourth form, and it

is like unto that of the Son of Man. Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.

We need some new commentators. A multitude of economic terms and principles await their translation into moral and spiritual speech. Two things the Church must have. One is spiritual authority; the other is human sympathy. If she gain or assume a spiritual authority without human sympathy, she becomes what the Master would have called "a whited sepulchre filled with dead men's bones." If, on the other hand, her human sympathy be ever so deep, warm and passionate, and she have no spiritual authority, she can but lift a limp signal of distress, with a weak and pallid hand.

Her disciples, then, must go to the Mountain of Transfiguration with Jesus. The next hour of the day they must go down with Him upon the plain of human life to heal men of their diseases. But they cannot do His work upon the plain, unless they have been upon the mountain top with the Master, so that they may come down radiant with the light that shines from His face.

> "The world sits at the feet of Christ,
> Unknowing, blind and unconsoled.
> It yet shall touch His garment's fold
> And feel the heavenly alchemist
> Transform its very dust to gold."

The author should acknowledge an indebtedness, covering the entire period of his ministry,

to James Martineau, Phillips Brooks and other prophets who have been among his greatest teachers and inspirers from whom, in the utterances of this book, he has drawn with freedom.

CHARLES S. MACFARLAND.

New York.

The Pattern in the Mount

I

THE IMPERIAL SPIRIT OF JESUS

THE creeds and confessions have largely presented to us the eternal Christ in speculative terms. They have been interested in His relation to the universal order, and deal with such philosophic questions as the nature of His birth, His preëxistence and the manner of His resurrection. We have in them too little of the human grandeur of the man, Jesus of Nazareth. Indeed these in some measure have been permitted to obscure the splendid manhood of the Master. There has been some loss in this. We have often failed to reach men by these philosophic terms, psychological interests and mystical rhapsodies. In our emphasis upon these things we have failed to picture Jesus adequately in terms of moral power.

While we should not depreciate this wealth of thought, there will be great gain if we can bring the moral power of Jesus to win the moral mastery of men and to arouse great moral enthusiasm. I know it would have been a great help to me, in my boyhood and young manhood, had I been led to appreciate the manhood of Jesus. The creeds and the confessions had a

sense of vagueness about them, which resulted in the obscuration of the Master as a great vital source of human inspiration. It might have been better if we had reversed the order and had thought of Jesus, first, in human terms and then, in the order of thought, in terms of His divine being. Indeed the best approach to the divine is through the human.

The moral beauty of Jesus' character centres in the cross, which shone before Him and which beckoned Him on from the very beginning of His splendid life. Here, again, the meaning of the cross has been greatly limited by human philosophic speculation. It has been obscured as a living inspiration to living men, with their duties and temptations, with their noble aspirations to be inspired and their moral weaknesses to be shamed. The cross does not mean much to men until it becomes the symbol of a great, unutterably noble life. Looked at in this light every man who wants to be a strong and noble man might well have a crucifix ever before his eyes.

The moral greatness of Jesus is simply beyond compare. The Gospels glow with moral courage from beginning to end. Seen in this light men will come to love Jesus, as they behold Him mingling in His uncompromisingly democratic spirit with publicans and sinners, while the Pharisees shower their scorn upon Him. Their manhood will be stronger as they

behold Him before Pilate and Herod in His indifferent calmness. It is inspiring to look at Jesus, combining, as He does, His great intellectual power with an attractive modesty, His tenderness with courage, His meekness with boldness, His self-sacrifice with a great manly spirit, His enthusiasm with patience, His compassion with moral indignation, His humility with self-respect; "the elements so mixed in Him that nature might stand up and say to all the world: This was a man." The compelling impression of these Gospels is that of a sovereign personality. Before His august presence they fell back in the garden and trembled at Calvary.

This moral power of Jesus is one great revelation of the cross. It was a voluntary cross. "And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And He took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto Him, saying: Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall kill Him; and the third day He shall rise again."

Amid all the variations and vicissitudes of Jesus' life, with all its lights and shadows, He walked undeviatingly in one straight path from the Jordan to Calvary. Expediency found with Him no place with her beseeching subtleties. The consideration of consequence exercised no guiding or repressive hand.

We have a beautiful prophetic gleam in His young boyhood, of which, I doubt not, there were many. "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" The baptism in the Jordan was His maturer consecration. In the wilderness we see His ultimate decision. At Cæsarea Philippi came the open avowal. At the transfiguration came the frank prophecy of His inevitable human fate. Now He is on His way to Jerusalem and He knows where He is going. It is evident that He saw it and felt it all along. "For this cause was I born." "To this end came I into the world." And again upon another occasion, "My time is not yet come."

One meaning of the cross, perhaps *the* meaning of the cross, is that at Calvary we witness the fulfillment of the most heroic life the world has ever seen. This moral Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords. He has been for two thousand years standing in the midst of the world, the enrichment of its thought, the sovereign embodiment of its ideals. The moral

world has been made by Him, and His supreme example is the alluring and uneffaceable picture upon the walls of human memory. The surest approach to the Divine Christ, the Son of God, is by the following of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Man.

So while it is true that the thought of Christ helps me as I think of Him in His relation to eternal Being, as the revelation of the heart of God, it is also true that He helps me as He reveals my prophetic to my untrue self, as He shames me in His effulgent noble light and inspires me by His nobility. There are other values to Jesus, but of supreme value is the imitableness and the reproducibleness of His character. I wish that with the brush of a great artist I could paint a new picture of Him. I would paint Him as a young man with His face turned towards Jerusalem. I would make a series of pictures. I would paint Him first as a frank, open-faced boy in the temple; and out in a distant background I would put the cross in its shadowy outlines. Then I would paint Him in the wilderness, under the stress of the temptation to kneel down and worship evil for the sake of the kingdoms of the world. I would picture the face of the young man looking away again towards that distant cross, now a little clearer. I would picture Him on the dusty Galilean road with the disciples, some of them

turning their backs upon Him, but with His face resolutely fixed towards the heights of Calvary. I would go on and paint that face again as He stands amid the scornful Pharisees, the face averted from them, because He still keeps it turned towards Jerusalem; before Pilate as he asks, and answers the question as he asks it, "Art thou a King?" I should like to show Him to men in the quiet hour upon the mountainside, in Gethsemane, at that last supper, with His eyes still looking out beyond upon that same cross, now clearly seen between the two other crosses.

And under each of these pictures I would inscribe the words of Luke, "His face was as though He would go up to Jerusalem." I should like to have that series of pictures upon the walls of every college room and upon the mind of every young man in this nation.

The theological Christ has had its power, the mystical Saviour has had His influence, but it is a great loss if this magnificent picture of the moral Christ is lost to view. If men could see it, it would appeal to them. If men once could witness it they would admire it. They would all say with the great soldier of old, "Nazarene, Thou hast conquered." If they could see that cross in this splendid light they would also read on it the inscription of Constantine's vision, "By this sign, conquer." I remember how at

one time a very liberal-minded hearer came to me with a little theological objection, because I ended my prayers, "For the sake of Christ." I told him that I used that expression, not so much as an appeal to the Father as an appeal to myself. With such a picture as I have tried to suggest might we not all be moved to do great things "for the sake of Christ"?

Another picture in the Gospels, wondrously attractive, is that of the Master's last hours with the disciples, as He gives His message of farewell.

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

"In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword." Jesus is reassuring His disciples. He says to them: Be courageous, be bold, overcome the world. By the world He means the temporal life. Be masters, He says, over that life, let your spirits overcome it.

What a sublime picture! There He is, awaiting the end. He is going down in apparent defeat to human eyes. His life seems naught. The cross awaits Him, a cross between the crosses of two thieves. Barabbas is to be chosen in-

stead of Himself. He no longer has any followers, except those faithful few, and even they are trembling, fearful and ready to flee. Yet He utters these strangely contradictory words, "I am the Master of the world."

We have here another revelation of the character of Jesus, of His triumphant, majestic person, in which He stands out as the inspiration, as the example for human life and of a noble attitude towards human life.

His glorious life is still centering in the cross towards which it has been leading. From the beginning He has seen the end. Behind Him is a long trail of moral strength. From Him goes the impression of a sovereign personality. He is again the supreme example of noble living, for the manhood of our day, with its alternating bravery and cowardice, with its noble resolve and its weak compliance. Jesus becomes first the shamer and then the inspirer of human living.

Having in some measure thus apprehended the mind of the Master, and gathered something of the moral grandeur of His life, we may, in this scene, seek to discover the hidden secret of His outward splendour. Let us try to look into His soul and discover the meaning of this majestic, brave, strong, impellingly attractive manhood. Look again at the situation under which His words were uttered, remember that He is facing a cross, listen to His words: "Peace I leave unto

you," "Be full of confidence," "I have conquered the world."

Another strange thing is the contradictoriness of the Master. For upon another occasion did He not say, "Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword"? Thus we have here two of the "hard sayings" of Jesus, as they are called in the New Testament. Sometimes when He uttered such sayings, men who had hitherto followed Him turned their backs upon Him and "walked no more with Him." These sayings are very often in the form of an apparent contradiction. He tells men, for example, that they save their life by losing it; that they live by dying; that they are served by serving; that they receive by giving.

How are we to explain the paradox of these two contradictory utterances? Shall we avail ourselves of the liberty of criticism and say that one appears in the synoptic Gospels and is historical, while the other appears in the Fourth Gospel and is unhistorical? Shall we decide that one of them is an interpolation? This is altogether too easy and ready a method. Let us wait and see if we may not bring them into harmony.

First of all look at the second utterance and see how true it is. He sent those disciples forth into the world. Did they not find the sword? Their story is a continuous one of persecution, impris-

onment, death. If there was one thing they did not find it was peace. Peter and John began at Jerusalem. They were told they must not speak or teach in the name of Jesus. They went out, prayed for courage and went to preaching again. For it they were beaten with stripes. They received their hundredfold reward "with persecutions."

One of the tragic pictures of the New Testament is that of another of their companions, Stephen, stoned to death by an infuriated mob. James, the brother of John, met death by Herod's sword. Peter finds himself within prison walls. One of their persecutors was converted, Saul of Tarsus. He goes to Lystra and Derbe, where he is stoned and drawn out of the city, supposedly dead. At Athens he is rudely mocked by the wise men of that wise city. Conspiracies innumerable are formed against him. He finally falls before them and dies at Rome. Thus he tells in summary the story of his life; in labours many, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths oft. Five public beatings with forty stripes save one each time. Thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck, a night and a day in the deep, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often,

in cold and nakedness, and withal the care and burden, not of one, but of many, unmanageable churches. What mockery are Jesus' words to him! "*Peace* I leave with you." How fortunate if the Fourth Gospel were written very late and is unreliable! Does it not make our Lord guilty of a false prophecy?

The story goes on through succeeding ages. The successors of these disciples live and die in Roman catacombs and caves. They are hunted, hungered, despised, persecuted, suffering unto death. How it must have mocked them: "*Peace* I leave with you." Jesus' bequest was broken, or at least this codicil revoked.

But even all this is less perplexing than the utterance coming from the lips of the man who spoke it. Was it a mistaken prophecy of Jesus? Because His own life was so calm and peaceful did He suppose that His disciples' would be also? Look for a moment at the life of the man from whose lips these words come. Follow Him in His weariness, in His rejection, in His disputes with carping critics, with His misunderstanding and quarrelling disciples. Not a place to lay His head. Go with Him on the mountainside at night. Witness Him in the garden where He sweat as it were great drops of blood. Behold Him on Calvary between thieves. Watch Him crowned with thorns, buffeted, spat upon, mocked in disdain. What a contrast and contradiction

are His words: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you."

But if we go back and look at those disciples again we behold another aspect of their life. Peter is there, it is true, in prison. But we read about the presence of an angel of the Lord and of a light in the midst of the darkness. Think of some of those little gatherings in the upper rooms with the breaking of bread and prayers. Look at Paul with his visions all full of beauty. Read his epistles, vibrant with joy and hope and faith. On the sinking ship he is the one buoyant spirit of them all. He goes into the midnight prison again where he sits thrust into the inner ward with his feet fast in the stocks, and you hear him, with Silas, singing hymns.

Go back again and look at the life of Jesus. Look beyond the outward vicissitudes. Seek to penetrate to the inner consciousness of the suffering man. There is no thought of pessimism in His Gospel. He is ever lighted up by faith and hope and joy. Behold Him before Pilate! His countenance is untroubled. Pilate is the disturbed and restless one; the troublesome dreams were those of the chamber of his household.

Our paradox is partly solved. Both prophecies are true. He did send a sword on earth. He did at the same time leave His bequest of peace.

But our deeper question is not answered. Is this true of human life in general? Whence has

come the finest literature, the literature of peace, joy, light, hope, inspiration, triumph? Has it come from men whose lives were free from suffering, pain and disappointment? Sometimes, perhaps, but not very often. It has not come from those who lived in kings' palaces and wore soft raiment. Most of it has come out of the depths of dungeons, from blind poets, from disease-racked bodies.

It is the voice of Boethius from his prison cell, of Defoe in the pillory, of Silvio Pellico under the fiery leads of Venice or in the bitter cold of his Austrian dungeon. It has come from John Bunyan in Bedford jail. Hence has the literature of hope issued forth; our hymns of joy; our stories of faith.

Jesus' prophecy is true. The reason it did not seem to be true was because we did not read it aright. Read it again: "Peace I leave with you." "*My* peace I give unto you." "*My* peace." "*Not as the world.*" It means that this outward life is not our reallest life. It means that our outward and inward life are in large measure independent of each other. It means that true peace does not come from external situations but from something that is within us; our inward sense of our rightness with God, our consciousness of true purpose and true heart. It means the estimate of things by a view from above. It means that heaven is not a place to

which we go, but a condition to attain. It means that a man, within himself, may be like one enfolded in the comfort of his home while the storm rages outside. The ultimate victory of human life is this triumph of the inward spirit over the outward life.

We may make our appeal to the common life we know. Those among us who are the calmest, the strongest, the most peaceful, are not those whose lives have been filled with frittering joys, as we shall witness in another chapter of this book. They are those who have known suffering, pain and disappointment.

One of the most beautiful and pathetic of all the biographies I have ever read is the generally unknown one of Anne Steele. Her life was that of a constant invalid, with perpetual suffering and abiding sorrow. The issue of that experience was in such a hymn as this:

"Father, whate'er of earthly bliss
Thy sovereign hand denies;
Accepted at Thy throne of grace,
Let this petition rise;

"Give me a calm, a thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessing of Thy grace impart,
And let me live to Thee.

"Let the sweet hope that Thou art mine,
My path of life attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end."

"Peace I leave with you; *My* peace I give unto you. *Not as the world giveth give I unto you.*"

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword."

So Jesus means here that every man has two lives; the outward and the inward life. One of them controls the other. Either man's spirit conquers his circumstances, or his circumstances subdue a yielding spirit. That spirit either humbles and degrades itself and the man is a slave, or that spirit is unconquerable and the man is a monarch.

Just look back again a little and watch Jesus in those closing days. He becomes stronger and stronger as He approaches nearer the cross. Thus the secret of the moral grandeur of His life is the imperial power of His unconquerable spirit.

I am trying, as I have said, to give to men a vital meaning for the cross. Look at the Master fresh from Gethsemane, facing that cross, with not one brave soul to stand by Him to the end. Hear again that calm, majestic utterance, "I have conquered the world." Imagine yourself there with the disciples, facing their life, and hear Him as He says to you, "You may suffer and yet dwell upon sublime heights." "The storm of ruin may come and yet there need never be any truce of the spirit." It was just what He had

been saying all along to them, "I will give you rest." He looked out on the city of His day; He saw men as we see them to-day, racing each other for wealth, looking upon each other with mutual suspicion. He was saying to them. "Do not be like the frail craft, like the little steam yacht; be like the great ocean steamer with her iron hull, as she moves on her way with her ponderous throbs; do not let yourself be tossed about upon the ocean, but ride through her billows."

He was bidding men, as He bids men to-day, to seek and possess the great ultimate realities of life. He was saying, "Forget to watch your little engines and look out upon the ocean and up into the sky,"

> "And hear at times the sentinel
> Who moves about from place to place;
> And whispers to the worlds of space,
> In the deep night, that all is well.
>
> "And all is well, though faith and form
> Be sundered in the night of fear;
> Well roars the storm to those that hear
> A deeper voice across the storm."

Do not guard your business, your paltry pleasures and little interests while you forget to think about the deep things of life. Try to catch His spirit as did the great Apostle Paul, who learned how to abound and also how to be abased, to rejoice in adversity and to let all the

experiences of life give their lessons and their strength. Do not long for some soft, pine-laden, balmy southern air, but be made stronger by the bleak winds of the rock-bound New England coast. Get hold of something that is beyond the reach of men, some joy which no man taketh from you. Be like the rock unmoved by the surging of the waters. When stricken down, rise again mightier than before. Such is the voice of these great Gospels. You remember that picture of the Master in the midst of the troubled sea, and that when He spake, "There was a great calm." So the peace of Jesus was not the peace of surrender, but the peace of victory.

We see in the world differing kinds of men. Some take things easily, and they say, "All is right, do not disturb things, let them alone." The second see the wrong of the world, are moved with indignation and waste their strength storming over the ills of life. The third see all of these wrongs, but face them with the inward assurance of victory as they deal their mighty strokes with calm, steady, quiet hand.

There are then these different methods of facing and viewing life. The method of placid acquiescence is that of a false peace. The method of a profound, divine trust is that of true peace. Thus this peace of Jesus does not come by having our trials taken away, but by the pouring in upon

us of a great strength. Sometimes we need to have the helps of this earth taken away from us, in order that we may be led to God. Jesus felt these earthly supports withdrawn from Him. His followers were failing Him. He was alone, and so while the failing disciples were asleep, He was with His Father in the garden of Gethsemane, gaining His strength.

"My peace I give unto you." "Not as the world giveth." Not the peace of ease, but of struggle; not of self-content, but of self-sacrifice; not of yielding to evil, but of conflict with it; not of accommodation to the world, but by the subjugation of it. And so He adds, "I have overcome the world." It is a strange parodox, this peace of conflict; it is the peace of an imperial spirit, which rises by its own victory over human circumstances.

The peace of Jesus Christ does not come only through some mystical contemplation, or through some vague experience. It comes more by our sharing of the spirit of the Master, by the earnest following of duty, the noble facing of responsibility, the bold confronting of difficulties, the patient bearing of calumny, the quiet endurance of persecution, the brave carrying of sorrow and the prayerful sanctifying of our joys. Gethsemane and Calvary are the price of this spirit. Rest can only follow labour. The overcoming of outward things is the condition of inward peace.

Religion is not simply something for women, or for men when they are sick or dying. In those closing days of Jesus they left this noble man to be admired and worshipped by a few faithful women. So men to-day have done; but now I ask; do it humbly, do it modestly, do it knowing that you are not worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoes, but be His disciples, admire His character, do things "for His sake," give Him a great, manly affection.

You have been hearing it for years, "Come to Christ, give your hearts to Christ." Look again at this scene. Hear His "My peace I leave with you." "Be brave men, overcome the world as I have overcome it." Look at His cross, and do not creep away and leave Him to Mary and the other women.

"And I saw heaven opened—and He was called Faithful and True, His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written,—King of kings and Lord of lords."

"And I saw thrones and I saw them which were brought to suffering for the witness of Jesus and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, nor received his mark on their foreheads, nor in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ."

"Thou seemest human and divine;
The highest, holiest manhood Thou.
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

You remember how Peter, in the sad moment of his cowardly fear, looked and caught sight of the face of Christ; then went out and wept bitterly. So we should do, again and again; for again and again we play Peter's part. Like the other disciple, Mark, we flee away, leaving our cloak in the hands of His enemies. He sees us, like the eleven at the crucial moment, as we fail Him. Again and again, when we do Him honour, we do it, as did Joseph of Arimathea, in secret.

"One look of that pale suffering face
Will make us feel the deep disgrace
Of weakness."

Social Redemption

II

TRUE AND FALSE CULTURE

"THE Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

We are accustomed to associate and blend this lofty prophetic utterance with the thought of its fulfillment in the Saviour of mankind. Let us, however, consider it in the light of its original meaning and application. It refers to "the Servant of Jehovah." This term, as used in the book of Isaiah, refers to a little group in Israel, its "saving remnant." It means those men of the nation who, in the midst of all its vicissitudes, remained true to its highest mission. They were the thoughtful few of the nation who steadfastly kept their hearts and minds upon abiding truths, and who, in the midst of the shadows, kept their eyes fixed upon the guiding star of Israel's ideals. They represented the culture of Israel.

In other chapters of Isaiah they are so referred to, as in the fiftieth chapter, where the Servant

of Jehovah represents himself as uttering his prophetic message, "With the tongue of the learned."

In its prophetic blending of the human and the divine, the Bible throughout is mediatorial in its estimate of humanity. It is ever giving to us a wonderful succession of pictures of God, of the human race, and of the great leaders of the race standing between God and mankind, revealing the Infinite to the finite, the divine to the human, and ever bringing them closer together. The philosophy of Scripture solves the question of individual and social life. It is ever showing us that the individual fulfills his personality as he gives himself to the social order of humanity.

Two books recently appeared simultaneously. The one is called "Beyond Good and Evil," giving us the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. The other is entitled "The Christian Ministry and the Social Order."

These two books illustrate a contrast. The philosophy of Nietzsche is that of an excessive individualism. It is a bald confession of the ruthless law of the survival of the fittest. He tells us that it is all nonsense to talk of giving ourselves for the sake of others. He insists that we must yield to the inevitable law of selection. While, doubtless, his philosophy is misunderstood and is not so bad as the reviewers have

sometimes made it appear, nevertheless, in its emphasis, it ultimately means, "Every man for himself." The world is only made better by the process of selection.

The other book gives a different emphasis. It does not deny the necessity for self-culture, but it goes on to insist on the use of self-culture by the means of self-giving. It is a plea to young men who are going out into the ministry, not to withdraw themselves from the life of the world, but to give themselves, heart and soul, to the realization of democracy, to the uplifting of the social order into a great brotherhood of mankind in which the strong will remember the weak. Broadly speaking, the one book is really a plea for the culture of the few at the expense of the many; the other is an exhortation for the use of the culture of the few for the sake of the many.

Our modern culture is under the fire of criticism. There is wide-spread doubt as to its value. When the people get together to choose those who shall guide their destinies, they are more and more electing from their own and are less inclined to choose the cultured men of their city for its elective offices. Our great democratic leaders are not, in the main, men of culture. It must be admitted that this distrust is not without its grounds. The natural inclination of men would be to select, as their leaders, those who

are above them in wisdom and consecration. They do not intentionally mean to elect false leaders. The trouble is, in part, that men of culture have been tried by them and found wanting. They have not been sufficiently in touch, in sympathy, with the feelings, the wants, the needs, the hearts, the minds of those whose destinies have been placed in their hands.

There is a true and a false culture. The great prophets were the exponents of a true culture. Later on, the Scribes and the Pharisees, who took their places, were the representatives of a false culture.

When Jesus came to perform His great mission He found the culture of His day largely unusable. He had to build His great kingdom of heaven with a few publicans and fishermen. The greatest obstacle that Jesus encountered was the counterfeit culture of His time, which even pointed to Him with scorn and said, "This man eateth with publicans and sinners;" which said again, "This man cannot be a prophet, otherwise He would have known that this was a sinful woman and He would not have let her touch Him." The fallacious philosophy which Jesus encountered was much the same as that of Friedrich Nietzsche.

History records the same thing over and over again. The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. Out of the

mouths of babes and sucklings God has ordained strength. Take for example the college or the university in the midst of a great city. How little influence it often has upon the life of that city. How frequently it is cloistered. It keeps its treasures to itself. How proportionately few of our college graduates are really effective as great moral leaders. Take our college clubs. As I go through Clubdom in New York City, about 44th Street, I often think of it. How little those great bodies of men are doing for the life of that great city. They are given over, at best, to their own social culture. They might well get together for this, but at the same time for something larger. They might become great organizations of strength in the moral life of the city. It is only occasionally, among a few students of economics, that we find our college professors men of broad sympathies, wide contact, and powerful influence in civic or in social life.

Not long ago I received a most suggestive letter from a wage earner. It was filled with great prophecies. It burned with sympathy. It was a suggestion of the highest form of culture. I passed it over to a university professor to read. I suppose he could have read it had it been in Hebrew or had it related to ancient Babylonia or Chaldea, but it was an unknown tongue to him. He was totally incapable of comprehending its meaning.

In relation to our theological education, for men going into the ministry, I have been asking myself a few questions lately. Might not these men better study less Hebrew and substitute a little Yiddish? Might they not learn some Italian, German, Russian, Magyar, in order to come into closer touch with the peoples from all over the world who surround their little parishes, even if they did it at the expense of some ancient Greek and Latin? Perhaps they might divide their Greek and learn some ancient and some modern. For it is true that much of our ministry is dying, or is dead, of culture.

Only a little while ago, I heard a strange plea from a minister whose parish is situated in a great democratic manufacturing community. His advice was that we must refrain from trying to adjust the social order. He said we must leave things to God, God would take care of it all and we need not interfere with His designs. In speaking with another minister, of great movements for civic reform, for the purification of the life of our municipalities, he dismissed the whole matter by saying, "Let those enter into it who want to. I have no taste for it."

Another, in my hearing, recently congratulated himself that, after a pastorate in a busy cosmopolitan city full of all kinds of humanity, he had succeeded in obtaining another pastorate in a quiet, remote, suburban community and he

ended by saying, "I am glad to get away from it all." These are examples of false culture.

In a recent address at a student conference, of men preparing for the ministry, a well-known layman advised ministers to keep to what he called "the Gospel and to let all social and economic questions alone." This is the culture of the Scribes and Pharisees.

I am always more than doubtful about the notices which we sometimes read in church calendars, requesting the people to let the minister alone so many hours a day. He must not be disturbed. Should he not find the way of conserving his own inner life while he is in the very midst of his outward activities? He must not become a victim of too much sobriety and order. He must simply be willing to give himself to anybody and everything at any time of day or night.

It is also true that our churches have come to be considered as the homes of culture. Thus construed, or misconstrued, that is why the people have become distrustful of them. There are many churches that have died of too much culture of a spurious kind.

While all this is true, it is not really a criticism of culture. It is a criticism of a wrong conception of culture. This false culture is the kind which leads the woman, in her ambitions for social or literary distinction, to give up motherhood

and the home. It is the kind which leads the professional man to worship at the altar of success and to forget the altar of his fireside. To gather up the whole thought, any culture is counterfeit that separates us from our fellow men.

The saddest thing in the world is this misuse of things good in themselves. Thomas Wentworth Higginson once wrote an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* entitled, "The Cowardice of Culture." He gave a long list of famous names, of men who had proven false prophets. They all had the same fault. They did not have confidence in mankind.

The result is that such cultured lives are wasted because their contact with the world is lost as they lose the sense of sympathy. They are like a great dynamo without any connection with the belts and wheels. It is sad that in their preparation for the task of life they lose sight of the task itself. Such men and women spend their lives getting their tools in order and never do anything with them when they are sharpened. Among the greatest wastes of life is this waste of culture. Take any college class and witness the few who really use what they have gained for the service of the world.

Phillips Brooks was a splendid example of true culture. How beautifully he blended power with sympathy, profoundness with simplicity. One of his finest sermons is called "Visions and Tasks."

He pictures Peter on the housetop, witnessing his vision of truth, with the great human life below, knocking at the door of the house, that the apostle should come down and shed the light of his vision upon the waiting race. He then gives us the picture of Peter plodding over the dusty hills as he follows his vision with service. He shows us how we must bring together the truth of God and the facts of life. He talks, with the utterance of a prophet, on the double power of knowing and of loving, of receiving and giving.

And yet the culture of the world is the life of the world. This Servant of Jehovah was the saviour of the nation. While it is sad to see men who behold visions but do no work, it is also sad to see men trying to work without inspiration. So we may say that a false culture is that which separates us from the world, from men, from life, while true culture is the culture of service.

The world is full of men to-day who are able to think profoundly. It also has many men who are able to feel deeply. Its sovereign need is men who can both profoundly think with the mind and deeply feel with the heart.

There are three kinds of men and women. The first are those who both neglect and despise all culture. The second are those who make culture an end in itself. Each of these is blind in one eye. Then there are the third who reveal

the splendid capacity of blending culture with service.

We are going to have a new university in the future. It is not to be represented so much by the monastery as by the social settlement. The so-called classics and classical education will be greatly widened in their scope. This new university will have as its aim the preparing of men for service through culture, not simply the giving to them of culture itself. It will send out men for civic leadership, political service, social betterment.

There are signs of the coming day. One of the ancient universities of England, with all its classic conservatism, has recently given its honourary degree to Commander Booth of the Salvation Army. Here was an instance of the recognition of true culture. I am glad to see my friend, Mr. Robinson, in his church down among the mills of Holyoke, sending to Amherst College and Mt. Holyoke College for students to come over and help him. It rejoices my heart to see Chicago Theological Seminary selecting as its president, Dr. Davis, fresh from the environment of his work among the foreign population of New Britain. I rejoice to find Professor Bailey of Yale bringing himself and his students into touch with the civic life of New Haven.

One of the most beautiful pictures upon which I ever looked is the picture of Jesus together with

the fishermen. There He is, as always, the true example. We see the light of culture reflected from His shining face upon the countenances of the eager toilers of the sea. Over against this, witness the false culture of the Scribes and Pharisees. How splendidly Jesus gathered it all up when He declared that we should love God with *mind* and heart and strength, and our brethren as ourselves. This was what Jesus meant when He took this text of Isaiah and applied it to Himself.

True and false culture: the false, that which removes us from the world; the true, that which gives its richness and becomes richer as it gives. The false, that which divides humanity into selective groups and widens the gulf between men; the true, that which touches every point of human life with human sympathy.

In yonder university city, there is that great group of fine scholars, profound thinkers, earnest truth seekers, and hard toilers by the light of the midnight oil. I love to see them as I go about among those massive buildings.

But then also, as I pass from the great university to take my train to come home, I go down through the other parts of that city with its multitude of all the races of mankind and I think how sad it is that the one touches the other so little.

The first group wends its solemn way back and forth from the class room to the attractive

homes upon the avenue, while, at the same time, the other procession also passes back and forth every day from the mills and shops to the humbler homes of the narrow streets and alleys.

They never cross each other's paths. They do not know one another. They do not understand each other. They live in two different worlds. All this is wrong.

Again, every Sunday morning the one element gathers in the churches, or in the College Chapel, and then again in the afternoon in its social groups, while the other meets in the industrial meetings and its other brotherhoods. The two ought to meet together.

The great social problem of to-day, and there is no greater problem, is how to bring these together, how to put culture at the service of humanity and to thus fulfill the utterance of the Master, "He among you that is greatest is he that serveth most."

The great mission of culture: "to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

Suppose men gained this truth: every human being a child of God. Would it transform business? Would society be changed? Would it transform the Christian Church? Instead of that we have gone on, and we go on, with the old doctrine of election. Do you treat your fellows

in your business life as though they were children of our Father, every one of them a child of God? Your clerks, your partners, your office-boy, your bookkeeper, your employer, your fellow clerks, your subordinates? What do the trusts of capital and the combinations of labour answer to the question? How is it in society? Is it met by a few charity balls? How is it with women in the home and in the social realm? Does the society in which you move recognize every man and every woman as the child of God? How is it with your store-boys, your neighbours? Are we, with Jesus, lovingly receiving, and eating with publicans and sinners? Do you remember that these, and all other men and women, are God's children, and your brothers and sisters? What is the attitude of our nation? Of our national life something ought to be said. We are the marvel of the world in building up a nation out of all the peoples of the earth. But do we not regard and use these peoples as the builders of our highways, the constructors of our railroads and tillers of our ground, rather than as weaker children of God to be helped and uplifted by their stronger brothers?

How is it with the Church? How are we interpreting the life of men? We cannot say, "Our Father," unless we think of every human being as our brother. Every human being; how

is it with the Church? Do we ever talk of the "class" of people in our church and of the class of people we want there? We have no right to interpret our individual life upward, and then interpret our brothers' lives downward. That is just what we are doing. The true and whole view of life is its construction in the terms of fatherhood, of human childhood, and of universal brotherhood. Nothing less will do for Christ. Moral and spiritual evolution ceases to be such, and is immoral unless it take its path away from the scientific law of the struggle for individual existence and the survival of the fittest. The analogy must break here. Moral and spiritual order and progress is the survival of the fittest for the sake of the unfit. It is the uplifting of the weak. It is the fulfillment of Jesus' "new commandment" added to and superseding the decalogue of science. It is universal, absolutely universal. It must be so. Not one stray child may be left out. Deny the divine childhood of one single, solitary human being in the remotest corner of the world: black, white or yellow; good, bad or undetermined; enemy or friend—deny or suppress or extinguish the God in any one human being and the moral order of the universe is broken, there is no God worth worshipping, and you yourself are not a child of any God. Interpret one human life downward and they all go down. Election of any kind is ulti-

mate atheism. Not one stray human being can be left out. It means all men, of every colour, race and degree of goodness. You are God's child; so then is the humblest servant in your home. You are God's child; so is yonder moral outcast. You are God's child; so is that bad man behind the bars of human justice. It means every man in an association of men. It also means every man in every association. Brotherhoods cannot take the place of brotherhood. It is not gained when every black man considers every other black man his brother. It is not gained when every white man considers every white man his brother. It is not gained when every black man considers every white man his brother, and every white man every black man, if they leave out a single yellow man. It is not won when every man in the grocery trade is brother to every other man in the grocery trade. Nor when every workman at the bench has joined the Brotherhood of Carpenters. It is not realized when every labouring man unites in brotherhood with every other labouring man, any more than it is when every capitalist so considers every man of capital.

It is universal and reciprocal. It will come when every business man says "brother" to every working man. It will not come until every working man says "brother" to his employer. These two truths stand or fall together. You

cannot give the upward interpretation to your own life, if you give the downward interpretation to the life of one single human being. In terms of absolute and universal Fatherhood, in terms of the divine childhood in the man construing, in absolute and universal brotherhood, with the eye fixed, not on the form of dust, but on the godlike spirit in us, with the uplifting aim of the growing of that spirit in self and other men, with a heart that beats in love, tenderness and compassion for every being in the universe; ever saying, "Father," "Father," "Father"; ever saying, "Brother," "Brother," "Brother"—this is the Gospel.

If one human child has been left out in the Fatherhood of God, every man is left out with him, and there is neither God nor Gospel left, and Haeckel is right. Jesus proclaimed, and proclaims to-day, that not one was left out. And unless the feeling of your heart is of love for every human being, from Jesus Christ down to the man who blacks your boots and the woman who washes your clothes, and you can say, "Brother," "Sister," you cannot say, except as a vain repetition, as the heathen do, "Our Father."

I went into a hospital the other day. I witnessed a parable. A pale, weak, bloodless man was carried in. He was not strong enough to walk. He did not even come of his own volition.

Following him came a great, strong stalwart man, glowing with health. They brought them together. They bared an arm of each man. They brought them into fellowship by a conductor which carried the rich blood of the strong into the frail body of the weak. That is the meaning of spiritual culture and social service.

III

REJOICING IN TRUTH

WE live in no sluggard, slothful age and generation. We are in an era of great discoveries and marvellous inventions. We are searching out the hidden secrets of science and are finding ever new revelations of the infinite energy. Men are reaching the inaccessible, translating unknown tongues, availing themselves of hitherto undiscovered forces.

Coincident with this, we are finding divine revelations in the order of human life. Social distinctions are being broken up. Just as in science, the old groups and classes are gone, so in human life, age-long customs are yielding to new orders.

Human society is either to be reconstructed or destroyed; moral precepts are finding either their destruction or fulfillment. Religion is either departing or being transformed. On all sides men are timid, doubtful, and are both questioning and accepting at the same time. It is so difficult to distinguish between change and dissolution.

For instance in the pulpit, some preachers are preaching the old, which they only half believe, while others are preaching the new, which they

have only partially digested. We are facing new problems. Everything seems new and untried. The old rules will not work ; the new wine cannot be contained in the old bottles. The homiletic instruction of a quarter of a century ago is largely displaced. Wise, strong, and searching must be the moral leader of to-day, who can maintain the balance between the warm heart and the clear head.

Thus, it is easy to be either a pessimist or an optimist, and still easier to be without the wedding garment, speechless before the problems of our larger world. If we simply look upon the surface of things we are doubtful. If we can look into the depths, we are hopeful.

The Apostle Paul was in much the same situation in his day, and in his letter to the Corinthian Church he used one phrase which gives the secret of his great leadership, " Rejoicing not in iniquity, but rejoicing in the truth." So the real leaders of to-day are those who are finding and rejoicing in the truth. The sovereign need of our generation, with its plastic social order, is men who will work for creation and construction. We may well hope that the critic and the iconoclast have nearly had their day. For a time we have been overcome with evil. We are now ready to overcome evil with good.

All thoughtful, loving men feel that they are socialists in some right sense and true use of

that much misused word. But there are two kinds; those who content themselves with damning the world and those whose efforts are bent towards saving it. Some are still satisfied to storm and scold, while others are seeking to transform and to mold. These latter are the leaders of to-day and of to-morrow; those who can discern, find, and develop the constructive elements of abiding truth in the midst of changing forms.

Jesus entered upon such an age and He declared that He was come, "not to destroy but to fulfill." Therefore, he who learned the secret of Jesus, even though he were the least in the kingdom of heaven, was greater than John the Baptist.

We can witness this truth in our personal human relations. It is always better to rejoice in the truth, better to praise the good than to blame the bad. Appreciation is better than depreciation. Thus it is that we call out the best in men. In the treatment of the child, guidance is infinitely better than repression.

Some people take the other attitude to the extent, sometimes, of seeming to rejoice in iniquity. They are always counting the tares rather than the wheat. Take the attitude of men towards the Christian Church! They are telling us that it is in a serious twist. They even have the air of rejoicing in what they term its iniquity.

As a matter of fact, however, there never was an age when the ideals of the Church were so lofty as they are now. It is true that it has less creed, less ceremony and pharisaic punctiliousness. Yet it never was so vibrant with sympathy or so searching as to life and action. It is casting off its selfish individualism and is more and more becoming the kingdom of heaven. Take its ministry; it is outreaching to every human problem. To the man who wishes to rejoice in the truth, there is a multitude of things which no man can number.

This is not a plea for the doctrine of *laissez faire*. Criticism has its place. Even destructive criticism has its functions. There are wrongs to be denounced and bad men to be rebuked. But, at best, this is only preparation. Such prophets did their work from Samuel to John the Baptist, but it only prepared the way for Jesus Christ. Even such prophets would have been useless without their Messianic hope.

The real spirit of progress is wondrously witnessed in the thirteenth chapter of Paul's letter to the Church at Corinth. He was writing, very likely, from Ephesus, a sad environment. The church to which he was writing was in a still sadder environment. Witness how he seeks to draw forth the latent good in them.

They are to have the spirit of long-suffering and modesty. They must be not easily provoked,

not thinking evil, but bearing all things, believing all things, hoping all things, enduring all things. The apostle was no easy-going moralist. He saw the wrong and yet he believed in the right.

So the order of the world in which we live awaits such leaders, not those whose visages do cream and mantle like a standing pool, not those who unconsciously rejoice in iniquity because it fulfills their own dark prophecies. We need men large enough to rejoice in the truth, to see below the surface and to distinguish the difference between change and loss, men who can work away with unfaltering faith and unfailing hope, those who see that the critic or iconoclast, the prophet of denunciation, has his place, but that, at best, he is only the forerunner and should say, with John the Baptist, "There cometh one after me who was before me." The saviours of to-day and to-morrow must have the spirit of Jesus, not to destroy but fulfill, the state of mind of Paul, finding the truth and rejoicing in it.

It is easy to break the bruised reed and to quench the smoking flax. To stand up and denounce is not hard, but to call out the latent good, to educate, and to develop is the harder and the better task. The one method only needs vehemence. The other calls for patience, long-suffering, and all the qualities which Paul enumerates under the general name of charity.

Then too, after all, fulfillment involves destruction, but it does it by the larger process of displacement.

We have here one of the great measures of character. The greatness of faith and hope is simply the greatness of the man's own soul. He who would lift up must ever be looking up. Take Jesus, for example; the only perfect man who ever lived was the one who had the most faith in imperfect men.

How is it among men? Are the severest critics, as a rule, those whose own lives are the loftiest? Take it within the Church; is it not rather true that faith, hope, and patience are proportional to moral attainment, and spiritual power?

So, let us believe that the new Church will come out of that which is abiding in the old. Let us have faith in the new social order even though it may come through a painful process. Such is God's way. The new home will be fairer and better than the old which we are leaving, through the trying process of the removal of our household goods.

The rocks are rending. The Son of Man is on the cross, but after the third day the stone will be rolled away. Truth may be obscured but it is not dead. We shall yet see the Son of Man beyond the clouds of heaven.

Such is the spirit that is not overcome of evil,

but which overcomes evil with good. This is the faith by which the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of Christ. And now abideth faith, hope, love, believing, hoping, enduring;—rejoicing not in iniquity but rejoicing in the truth.

IV

THE HOPELESSNESS OF GODLESSNESS

"WHOM have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire but Thee.

"My flesh and my heart faileth: But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

A thoughtful man came to me the other day, and after reciting a long list of great and grievous evils, he asked: "How can a man be an optimist in the face of these awful realities?" He said: "So long as one remains an idealist, and interprets life in ideal terms, his life is filled with hope. But again and again the great actualities of life bear upon him, sadden his heart, and his great ideal is clouded by the shadows of actual life."

It is always very encouraging to a modern preacher to have a Nicodemus come to him in this thoughtful way. We wish that they would come oftener, even though it be to ask: "How, in the midst of prevailing and triumphant evil, can we labour on with hope and faith?"

In all probability the Seventy-third Psalm was written during the exile, or, at any rate, in some

similar experience. The children of Israel find themselves in the midst of a terrible environment of evil. It is evil of a kind particularly abhorrent to them. The highest of their associations and ideals are ruthlessly violated. The most sacred things of their life are trampled under foot. The first part of this Psalm pictures the prosperity of the ungodly in very bitter terms ; the evil of the world is "painful" to the writer. But the second part of the Psalm is full of a triumphant tone.

This is the striking characteristic of this inspired book. It is a great alternating utterance of hopelessness and hope. In many of these Psalms we have, first, the bitter cry of the outraged sense of righteousness, with a corresponding hopelessness. Then the second part sublimely rises to an assuring utterance of faith and hope. Again and again the same Psalm consists of a dirge and an oratorio, in very striking contrast. There is a wonderful and apparently contradictory contrast in mood. In general the Psalm begins in despair but ends in a sublime note of confidence.

"Lord, how are they increased that trouble me. Many are they that rise up against me." So the Psalm begins, but it rises on and on, and before it reaches the end it swells out into a great chorus of hope: "But Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me, my glory and a lifter up of my head." Another begins, "I am weary with my

groaning; all the night I make my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears." Then it suddenly rises: "Depart from me, O ye workers of iniquity, for the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping." It is like two great choruses; the one a profound question, the other a great and satisfying answer.

Sometimes the despair is almost bottomless. "Help, Lord, for the godly man faileth: for the faithful fail from among the children of men." Then like a resounding echo: "I have set the Lord before me; because He is on my right hand I shall not be moved."

So they move on, with their alternating notes, from the extreme of despair to the height of faith, the sense of horror ever changing place with the sense of hope. There is unity among them in this, that their one constant and unfailing message is, "Hope thou in God." They all end in the same last resort. It is a wonderfully vibrating, pulsating picture, full of dignity, breathing sincerity, alive with pathos, charged with the same solemnity, yet ever vibrant with unfailing and responding confidence, filled with the gloom of realism, yet fuller still of a magnificent and glowing idealism.

These Psalms are but the reflection of the varied and vividly contrasting moods of any seriously thoughtful man. No real man can entirely escape the sense of despair unless he is

blinded by moral astigmatism or asleep with stupefying selfishness.

The hopelessness of godlessness. A godless world is a hopeless world. A world under the guidance of God is a hopeful world, despite all its seeming hopelessness. By godless we mean the want of a great faith in the infinite guidance and sovereignty. By hopeless we mean the ultimate victory of evil.

This suggests two dangers which come to a man who thus deeply and seriously reflects. The first is the danger of pessimism, which is really atheism. The second is a false optimism which obscures the actual evil by a one-sided view of the ideal. Any man who takes life seriously finds himself facing a world which sometimes makes him shudder, fills his soul with horror, and at times with awful doubts and occasional flashes of despair, a world dark with griefs and graves, so dark that men cry out against the heavens.

Perhaps he may have the will to shut himself up within the walls of his comfortable home, engross himself with his own selfish interests, ignore the actual life about him, and give himself to selfish thought. But if a man bravely faces life, I doubt if any serious soul has not had moments when the questions have instinctively arisen: Can there be a God? If there be a God, does He rule the world? If there be a

God, and He rules the world, can He be entirely good?

Read to-morrow morning's paper. Witness its story of the contemporary world. Read its recital of degrading selfish human pleasures; of the slaveries of men's unholy passions, of the doings of men's sordid greed of gold. Read its story of the selling of the souls of men, the everlasting blighting of the holy emblem of womanhood. Listen to its tales of bribery, corruption, and the prostitution of life's most sacred trusts, of the oppressions of the weak and the poor, of its usurious and unearned profits, the devouring of widows' houses and the binding of heavy burdens grievous to be borne. Witness its manifold repetitions, in actual life, of the parable of Dives at his table and Lazarus cringing at the gate. Look at the dead men's bones which are daily drawn from whited sepulchres. Pursue the recital of its hypocrisies, its pretenses of long prayers, its hollow philanthropies, its specious, degrading codes of conduct, its heartless social castes, its profanations of the sacred relations of the altar and the home. Let any man do this and if he is not heartsick he has no heart to be sick. If his soul is not cast down he can hardly have a soul to be cast down. A deep-thinking, serious man, unless he has the witness of some prophetic light, cannot, as he faces the real world, bear the weight of the burden of his own heavy heart.

But the true seer while he thus views things as they are, while he thus feels like the prophets of old, must also answer to the other mood of the psalmist, and say, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

For if we have no hope in God we live in a hopeless world. This world would be too much for us without a great abiding faith in the Infinite. As I read, not long ago, Professor Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe," I said as I closed it, "How can a man live in such a universe as his? It is not a riddle, it is a great mockery and lie." The materialist, the man who has no God in whom he can have a great faith, how such a man can want to live I cannot see or understand. As he looks out on the lust, the greed, the cruelty of the world he asks with Paul, "Who is sufficient for these things?" He is bound up by two propositions, one of which he must accept. It is either God and unquenchable hope or atheism and absolute hopelessness. If he is to be a great, strong man, he must lift his eyes from the valleys of the shadow of death and look up to the eternal hills. His moral world is, at first sight, just as the natural world was to the infant race. It is a great enigma haunting him with a great fear.

But even in ancient times man began to look for a deeper meaning of the natural order. The Book of Job is a magnificent example of the in-

terpretation of nature. The Nineteenth Psalm is a splendid elucidation of the universe. Thus, as men looked with longing, the light came. By and by great and reverent scientists, like Drummond and Fiske, witnessed to the moral implications in the order of nature. So, as men got the sweep of vision, they began to see that down through the farthest ages back one increasing purpose runs. Men have discovered purpose and intention, goal and progress in the same way. To meet the moral cry of man we must have God as our interpreter of the human moral order. Unless we do so we are like infants crying in the night and with no language but a cry.

But if we do find God we can say, "God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth be removed and the mountains be carried into the heart of the sea: Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. God shall help her and that right early."

Here is the eternal difference between the hopelessness of atheism and faith in God.

You may find sin almost everywhere. You may find God everywhere, in great brave souls. Such a soul is an absolute impossibility in a godless universe. You may find God in your own brave soul. Unless we do find God at the heart

of this perplexing universal order we live in a hopeless world in which no real man would want to live. The world has had its great acres of darkness again and again lighted by the fires of great souls, and they have always been great, God-believing men. Of such were these courageous psalmists, the reformers like Luther and his fellows, the Apostle Paul, who spoke of men "without hope and without God in the world." Such a soul was Jesus Christ, passing back and forth from the dark plains of life to the mountainside of prayer.

I confess that some of the great questions of life are too much for me. I mean such questions as that of human destiny. I must leave them to God and I must have a God to whom I may leave them. Here it is that we see man at his best, bravely facing life, never trying to effect a cowardly escape, but ever with his hand outreached for God. We see man at his finest when we witness the great Godward outgoing of his soul. Here he is at his noblest. It is a holy inspiration to watch the mind of Plato as he struggles to express his infinite vision of the eternal goodness at the heart of the universe, to meditate upon Spinoza, who was, as every great man must be, a God-intoxicated man, to sit down with Kant, to participate with him in his great internal intellectual warfare, seeking God in one place when he cannot find Him in another, crying

out like Job, "O that I knew where I might find Him." If is a great help also to sit down with another of the psalmists as he bravely sings, in the midst of his enemies and in the face of great fears and transgressions, "Whither shall I go from Thy spirit or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell Thou art there; if I say surely the darkness will overwhelm me and the light about me shall be night, even the darkness hideth not from Thee but the night shineth as the day."

This is the great brave view of life—when we feel that no falsehood can eternally defeat, that no right can forever be crushed, that there is an everlasting goodness which no evil can ever put to death, that this universe has not gotten away from God. Some men are saying that they are realists, some that they are idealists. The true realist is he who sees the depths, but not the depths alone. The true idealist is not the one who soothes himself with dreams. The true man is he who sees and is touched by the wrongs of the world, is saddened by them, whose heart aches, whose tears are sometimes his meat, but who also transfigures the picture with the sunlight of the face of God. Then he can go forth, serious and strong, joyful and courageous, to transform that real, so far as he may touch it, into the ideal of his vision. He will, like the psalmist, have his

alternating moods. Sometimes the world will look black. Sometimes it will look like a great unanswerable doubt. It will do no harm if he lets it move the waters of his heart, but he must never let this lead him to forsake the Being without whom it is a hopeless world.

We have touched here the supreme and sovereign concern of human life. This longing for God is the finest yearning of the human soul. The most momentous crises and the finest hours of our life are when we cry out and say, "O that I knew where I might find Him!" The Holy of Holies of human life is the place where the individual human soul, in the inviolable solitude of its own being, faces towards the eternal reality, and asks for God with a great unutterable cry.

So should we live and strive and hope and pray, with the courage that faces the great moral problems of life, and with the bravery of an abiding faith, that as the eternal power in whom we live and move and have our being hath taken the chaos of the molten mists of ages past and wrought this universe of reason and of order; that as His molding hand hath raised man from the crouching beast until he bears the image of Himself; that as He has, from age to age, brought on this world by great movements of history to higher ideals and larger visions; that as He has for these two thousand years been lifting humanity by the power of the personality of Him

who is the brightness of His glory and the image of His person ; so His hand is still upon the world, so His eternal designs are being carried out, so Christ still lives in our midst, and He will be our guide, our Father, our strong deliverer, our mighty fortress, who wilt continue in His undying affection until the world is won by the appeal of beauty, truth and goodness.

He who has commanded the morning and made the dayspring to know his place, who canst bind the influence of Pleiades and loosen the bands of Orion, who biddest the lightnings, who guideth the stars in their courses in a universe unthinkable in its wonder and greatness, hast might and power enough to guide the moral movements of mankind, and as He hast, out of the depths of universal chaos, made the morning stars to sing in glory, so He will bring His moral purposes to pass within His own good time, with whom a thousand years are like a day, and goodness, righteousness and truth shall fill the earth with their praises.

Thus may we go on in our work with God, and by His help, following Christ, carrying our crosses, meeting our disappointments, facing our Jerusalems, standing before our Pilates, bearing our sufferings, shedding abroad our love, preaching the kingdom and teaching righteousness, and if need be ascending our Calvarys, that, with our Master, we may help to be the saviours of the

world, from its sin, its suffering and its moral wretchedness, and by our brave and loving service, righting its wrongs and helping God. And even greater than the great haggard hopelessness of godlessness may be the unutterable hopefulness of our abiding faith. So should we live and do our work with a great serious sense of a sovereign joy, which no man taketh from us.

V

THE UNIVERSAL LAW OF SERVICE

"BUT it shall not be so among you; But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto but to minister."

The thought of Jesus might better be expressed by saying that He came not "only" to be ministered unto. He did receive and gladly accept the ministry and support of His disciples. He felt a thrill of joy at their devotion. He speaks by way of emphasis. His chiefest joy was that of loving ministry, suffering service and the giving of His life. Yet perhaps it was no less the joy of His heart to see His followers participating in that same mutual loving ministry. Indeed, He said that this service, to each other and to mankind, was their best ministry to Him.

He gave utterance here to the twofold law of life. Man is both to be served and to serve. Jesus saw the two aspects of religion; and taught that the ultimate expression of religion was in this law of service. The utterances of the Master were always brief and simple. Yet every one of

them implies a truth as deep as the ocean of truth itself and implicates a principle as wide as the universe of God. Witness how fundamental, how universal, how absolutely essential is this truth of the law of service.

To show how universal it is we might begin with nature. The great scientists, when they have been reverent as well as great, have made spiritual discoveries in the natural order of life. We may witness the working of this law on every hand. We find interdependence and interrelation in the great solar system. Here nobody liveth to itself or dieth to itself. In the unity of the universe we find everywhere a mutual dependence. Let one part cease its work, lay down its service, and universal cosmos becomes universal chaos. Let the sun say, "I will no longer render service in this common order!" Let the swinging, whirling planet say, "I will no more do my task!" And universal disaster would follow. They are all bound up in mutual service. Let even the smallest part of the great machine get out of order and the whole mechanism may be destroyed. Thus all things live upon each other. The physical universe is a great system of symbolic unselfishness. So let the soil and rain refuse to serve their fellows, the flowers of the field, and the earth is no longer a garden of delight for the vision and utterance of the poet. But while they do their task of minis-

tering, the lily of the field is clothed in beauty greater than that of Solomon in his array of glory. Let the elements of nature refuse to provide for the birds of the air and their song no longer yields its joy.

Two books have been written in recent years which deserve careful consideration from all thoughtful people. One is Drummond's "Ascent of Man," and the other, John Fiske's "Through Nature to God." Professor Drummond finds in natural evolution, first, the struggle for life; but also the struggle for the life of others, from the very dawn of life. Professor Fiske speaks of what he calls "the cosmic roots of love and self-sacrifice." He tells us that nature has relation to the great moral end of mutual ministry. He says: "I think that it can be shown that in that far-off morning of the world, when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy, the beauty of self-sacrifice and disinterested love formed the chief burden of the mighty theme." "The very doctrine of evolution is the everlasting reality of religion." "We catch glimpses of the cosmic roots of love and self-sacrifice." Perhaps our highest and most beautiful type of service is in motherhood, and the greatest thinkers of our day find nature to be full of a beautiful maternity. God has thus made an altruistic natural order, in which the chiefest is the greatest server.

We find this same law in the relation between man and nature. We are accustomed to think of nature as serving man, yielding her bounty for his food, giving her stuff for his clothing, letting him harness her lightnings and her winds to do his bidding. But here again the law of service is mutual and universal; man must nurture and thoroughly care for her. He must till her soil, he must care for his cattle and his sheep, and give them food and shelter. Sometimes he must take them in his arms and bear them to their fold. Thus the association of man and nature is one of interchanging care and service. They help each other, and neither can live without the other.

This same truth is just as true of God and man. In the infant ages of the race it was thought of as a one-sided service; man must occupy himself with sacrifice and propitiation. Today, however, we think of God as a providing father of men, the willing servant of His people.

We might go back in our thought a little and think of the relation between nature and God, of God delighting in His own creation and rejoicing in the singing of the morning stars together. But the truth is most beautiful in the relations of God and man. Dr. George A. Gordon, in a recent sermon, said some things which might once have been considered as audacity or even blasphemy. He said that God, having made

man, was under obligation to treat him well, and that He owed him life and sympathy and love and service. So the delight of God is the expression of His love by helping man. His joy is also in the love and mutual sacrifice of man to his brethren. This leads us to one of the finest illustrations of our thought. God loves, above all things, to see us helping and serving each other. So He has put us in a world where we must do so or die. Look about on our common life and witness how it is transfigured by unselfish service and mutual ministry.

I go out to-morrow morning, and as I pass the factory with its busy hum, I think of men and women there, sometimes with very tired bodies, hard at work for many hours every day, preparing for me the clothing that I wear, or the materials with which I build my comfortable home. I pass on to the busy store. There stands the woman, perhaps with tired feet and aching back, ready to serve my wants. I go by the schoolhouse, and I think of the teacher with her tired head aching, perhaps, in this great service. I meet the lawyer hastening along with his green bag, that he may serve his clients and see that they have their rights. He reminds me of the judge sitting for long patient hours in the close room to see that men have justice. My eyes wander to the summit of the hill and rest upon the hospital where the soft-voiced, patient nurses

serve in their soothing ministry. I meet the physician, after his nightly vigil, on his way to help his fellows. I take the street-car and sit in comfort, while another man faces the cold, winter winds, that he may carry me upon some errand of mercy. The call comes from some far distant loved one. There stands the strong, brave man with his hand upon the lever and the throttle that he may bear me to my destination.

As I return to my home, in the silent watches of the night, I pass the policeman, shivering on the corner in his self-sacrificing service of protection. I am awakened from my sleep by the alarm bell, and I think of those who are ever ready to risk their lives to protect me and my home from the dread ravages of fire. Or I hear upon some stormy night the warning from yonder lighthouse. I look out and see its ever-burning beacon. There sits the watchman through the long hours of the night to protect the sailor on the sea, and he reminds me of those who brave the dangers of the deep in this great ministry of men. I look about my home. How many hours of work it took to build it! I find it in comfortable order and think in gratitude of the domestic who serves by night and day to keep it so. I sit down to the telephone, and at the other end waits the girl who often must endure, perhaps, my impatient exactions, ready to serve my instant call. I look out of the window, and

there comes the newsboy with my paper, the grocer with my food, the postman with my letters. The great team comes up the driveway with my fuel that I may be comfortable through the winter months. And I must not forget the busy man of trade and of commerce with his weighty responsibilities as he directs this indispensable ministry. Inspired by these thoughts, I wish to send out to the world this message of love and help and beauty. The printer takes it from me and hands it to the binder, and sends it out to give men hope and faith. We are a great and prosperous nation because men give themselves in this and countless other ways to serve their country.

Everywhere this world and life are instinct with service. We are all living on each other. It calls for the beautiful qualities of patience, sympathy, compassion, gratitude and prayer. It is ever calling out the best and noblest in us. We do it all for pay? You may look at life in that miserable way if you will, but, as Shakespeare says, "Nature teaches beasts to know their friends." Look out upon the wider life of mankind. Think of the nations with their interchanging commerce, each serving the other with food and clothing. Think of the great body of immigrants; they come to us that we may give them protection and a chance in life, but they also serve us. They build our highways, they go

down into the deep mines to help us keep our houses warm.

Perhaps this great law is seen at its best in the relations of the home. The father and husband toils for long hours that he may bring comfort to his loved ones, that he may provide for the wife and educate his children. And while he is doing this, the mother serves patiently in his home, in order that she may make it happy for him and bring rest after his weariness. There, by the fireside, sit the aged father and mother, who have already spent their lives, while the children and grandchildren wait upon them, that at eventide for them there may be light.

This law pervades the universe, natural and spiritual. We are in each other's hands. We are absolutely dependent upon each other. The comfort of all is impaired when any cease to do their service. Let the strike come in the mines, and men shiver in their cold houses. It is all mutual; we cannot live without each other's service. The true balance of life is gained when we are joyously giving and gratefully receiving. It is a beautiful world and a beautiful universe in which nature, God and man are in the mutual and interchangeable service of each other. It is sadly true that all this is not actual, that, as a matter of fact, men try to live on the efforts of their fellows. But it is a degrading and miserable view of life to look at it as a great crowded

bargain counter, where women are trying to get something for nothing. It is wretched to think of life as a great stock exchange, where men are madly seeking to gain at the expense of one another.

That is not the true way of viewing life. It will be an unmitigated misery unless you are willing to idealize it. But if you will look at it in the light of this sublime truth of Jesus, you may make it noble, you may make it happy and your hardest toil may be an abiding joy. When Jesus was called upon to declare the great question of human destiny, He drew a very striking picture. He represented men as ministering to Him inasmuch as they ministered to one another.

What then shall we do when we think of this vital truth? We must say, "I am receiving this great service, and in return I must render a full equivalent." Thus mercy is twice blessed. It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

The key of human happiness is found in constant, conscious participation, in mutual sympathy and gratitude and patience, in this great universal law, receiving by giving and giving in receiving, saving by losing and losing by saving. We must bear one another's burdens and we must let others bear our burdens. But we must ever be more solicitous to minister and do our share than to be served sufficiently ourselves.

"But it shall not be so among you; but whoever will be great among you, let him be your minister: And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

VI

THE LIFE MORE THAN MEAT

AS the Apostle Paul ascended the slopes of Mars Hill, in the Grecian City, to speak to the unheeding ears of its wise men, he beheld the altar to "the unknown God." In his classic address, he told the Athenians that, though they knew it not, they were all seeking this unknown God, and in the course of his utterance he gave voice to these majestic words, "For in Him we live and move and have our being."

In all the great human movements of our day, men are seeking this unknown God. These words from the lips of the Apostle Paul are representative of the greatness of the Holy Scriptures. The Bible, above all books, is characterized by the profoundness of its thought and the appropriate majesty of its expression. It is never trivial and superficial. Its words reach down into the depths. Its inspired writers often gather up a universal thought into one sentence of speech. Take for example the sense of the divine immanence that pervades the Psalms. In its deepest utterances it always relates together

the divine and the human; God and man are brought into their oneness.

The transcendence of God in the Scriptures is not that of the so-called absentee God of a later theology. It is the transcendence of character. With it there is always the immanence of sympathy. The idea of God throughout the Bible might be expressed in these words of the apostle: "In Him we live and move and have our being."

We talk to-day a great deal about what we call "other worldliness," as contrasted with a more particular "this worldliness." If by the sense of other worldliness we mean the isolation of the religious spirit from the life of mankind, then such other worldliness is harmful. If, however, we mean by it the sense of the Infinite in humanity, then it is the last of our senses which we should lose or impair.

All life, in its expression, is more or less material and physical and we should have no patience whatever with that sort of spiritual benevolence which, in place of the bread for the body, gives a tract on the Bread of Life.

But, at heart, all human life is spiritual, and while the Gospel must glorify the fruits of the spirit it must not forget the spirit itself. There is a tendency to-day to obscure this truth and to overmagnify environment over the inward life.

The kingdom of God will not appear simply

by doubling men's wages with no reference to conscientious service. The kingdom of heaven will not come through shorter hours of labour, without regard to the moral uses of leisure. Social regeneration will not be performed by building better houses, if there is no concern for better homes within those houses.

At the same time, while the life is more than meat, we must also remember that the meat is necessary to the life. Our social reformers are right in reaching up towards the heavenly through the earthly. While, with the one hand, we seek to transform the hearts and characters of men, we must, with the other, seek to gain for them human justice.

But it is true that sometimes a larger moral existence and a deeper spiritual sense would mean less necessity for philanthropy, and all economic reformations must have their roots in moral, spiritual impulse.

Our modern danger is that of divorcing social betterment from spiritual life, while the one ought to be the expression of the other. No social program will ultimately avail that is not expressed in terms of the spirit. The inward and the outward life must reflect each other. Our modern social movements will be good and abiding only as they are the revelation of the divine mind, as "In Him they live and move and have their being."

The weakness of our social reformers is that of substituting the circumference for the centre, of dealing in effects without sufficient thought of ultimate causes. In their passionate interest for man they forget the God in whom man lives and moves. This does not mean that we are to accept the alternative of Professor Forsyth, in his recent book on "The Person and Place of Jesus Christ," that the great religious issue of the hour is "the God that serves humanity or the humanity that serves God." But, on the other hand, we are not to serve man in place of God. We are to follow the word of Jesus and serve God through the service of man, with a thoughtful comprehension of the relation between the Infinite and the finite.

Of our social order, if it is to be abiding, of our democracy, if it is to endure, we must learn to say, in Him it must live and move and have its being. So while religion without humanity is sad, it is equally sad to have a humanity without religion. Such a humanity is transitory and specious.

Our real social leaders to-day are not those men and women who, in their blind zeal, would substitute humanity for religion, who would displace the Christian religion by the club and social settlement, who would neglect spiritual truth in the supposed interest of human comfort. Our real leaders are those men who have a pro-

found faith in a God who loves men, and whose love of mankind is an expression of their faith in the Eternal.

Yet our social reformers are right in reaching up to the heavenly through the earthly. In our training of the child we must first give him care and comfort, in order that we may bestow upon him truth and character.

Here then is the social gospel for to-day. We find its analogy in the natural order, in the development of the race. The difference between the savage and the civilized man is not a difference in physical comfort; it is that the later developed man has learned that his life, his movements, his being are in the life of the Infinite.

To take another analogy, our national and social life are under necessary laws. By them the home is protected, human life is kept sacred, justice is maintained. As we learn these laws we find the eternal principles beneath them. As in these laws we live and move and have our being, life becomes harmonious and safe.

Or again, in our human society we get the most out of it by living in it, conforming to its institutions of the home and the school and the Church.

Thus life rises only as it finds its place in the highest in the universe. And, at best, these are only analogies. Ultimately man lives higher

than nature. At his highest he rises above the social level of his social order.

Ultimately the world is not governed by nature, by law or by man. Our highest life is in the realm of truth and eternal principle. Nature has no meaning unless it is the expression of the Infinite thought, law has no sanction without the will of the Lawgiver, man is unaccountable except as the human child of the divine Father.

But what do we mean by living, moving and having our being in God? Not simply standing in awe of Him, not by the sense of fear, not by what we call faith in God, not even our love for Him as of a pure and holy being. It is the sharing of the divine heart and mind, coming to love the things He loves, yea, to hate the things He hates. It is thinking as God thinks; it is not seeking His favour, but seeking God Himself. This is the heart of religion, this is the soul of moral action. We have been afraid of the depths in religion, we have moved upon the surface of its waters, we have called religion by many other names. We have called it faith, belief, creed, action, deeds. By so limiting it we have been afraid to think of it as our life and being in the Infinite. This superficialism has gone in two directions, in the direction of form and ceremony on the one hand, and in that of outward act and deed on the other.

Religion is not what we think about God. It

is thinking and loving God's thoughts. In its social application it means loving men as their heavenly Father loves them, their bodies and their souls, their physical comfort and their characters. It is a great deal to gain for men better houses, food, wages and more leisure. It is infinitely more to give them also better hearts and characters.

Jesus is the sovereign example of a well-balanced mind and heart. He fed, He healed, He comforted men, He rebuked the rich with great severity, but He was always saying that the life was more than the meat. He was always leading men towards the fulfillment of their life in God. His whole life is a picture of the blending of religious faith with human sympathy, two elements which in Him God hath joined together and which by man should not be rent asunder.

This view of the social order transfuses philanthropy with a holy light. It irradiates action with the light of motive. We see humanity as a child of the divine, we learn that we can only rid men of poverty as we rid either them or their fellow men of sin. It becomes clear that we can best reduce the former by uprooting the latter.

The question is raised to-day as to what is the distinct message and aim of the Church. Some men are saying, either outwardly or more timidly to themselves, that with our great humanitarian

institutions there is little need of the Church. They forget that these grew out of the Church's gospel and, with their limited vision, they do not see that they can never endure without it.

Take the gifts which come for our great philanthropies. Who are the givers? They are almost always men whose hearts are touched by the Gospel and who seek to live a religious life. The Church is to do what Jesus did, find ways of expressing the divine in human terms and of revealing humanity in the light of its divine meaning.

Christian disciples must do their deeds of kindness and let them interpret and express their religion. They must also seek to interpret the life itself and find beneath in its eternal, guiding principle.

There are some men to-day who really believe that we can make the world both happy and good without God. But this is not true, if our ideal of a good world is a lofty ideal. The prophet, the teacher, the reformer, is hopeless unless he can see beyond the forces which he may witness in the life of the world itself. He needs ever to be lifting his eyes to the eternal hills and to feel the gracious presence of God mediating itself in human life.

Thus all life, all goodness, all permanent uplifting of mankind must be the unreturning, endless, Godward reach of the souls of men of faith. The

creature cannot do the task of the Creator, but if he believes this truth of the great apostle, then he knows that no falsehood can defeat, that no right can be crushed and he can work with faith and hope and joy.

Our social movements, our philanthropic enterprises, our economic betterments and other institutions, instead of taking the place of Gospel, pulpit, truth and religion, can never endure, can never be more than the outward passing semblance of a kingdom of heaven, without some institution, some spiritual school which is ever teaching men that salvation does not rest in political economy or in social enterprise. Above all these mansions of the earth there is a house not made with hands. In God all men and all their works and movements must live and move and have their being.

The thoughtful men and women among us seek the light in this direction. The world that they face is complex and difficult, its political, social and economic problems are very hard to solve. To such men only, and only to their vision, will the light of the Eternal bring much joy to the temporal.

Such men and women must be those of our churches, patient, thoughtful, passionate, wise and spiritual; those who pray, as did one of the great psalmists, "For with Thee, O God, is the fountain of life and in Thy light do we see light."

Rolling back the problems, the tasks of the world upon God, believing in truth, love and justice, ever saying of all humanity, "We are His offspring, for in Him we live and move and have our being."

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VII

THE WITNESS OF THE UNSEEN

THE deepest of truths often appear in the form of paradox. The Scriptures speak frequently of the invisibility of the Infinite and yet Jesus once declared that the poor in heart were blessed because they see God.

The most striking utterance of this nature was that of the apostle in his letter to the Church at Corinth: "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are unseen are eternal." This paradox obtains in all human life. Everywhere are its visible foregrounds and its invisible backgrounds. It is true that only as we see and understand the unseen can we come to know life at all.

When I looked upon Munkacsy's great picture, called Christ before Pilate, and caught the first impression, the subject seemed to be correctly stated. It was Christ before Pilate. But as I entered into the thought of the scene and remembered all its associations, and as I studied the countenances of the two striking personali-

ties of the picture, I caught the spirit of Pilate in the anxious, troubled look upon his face and I remembered that the troublous dreams that night were in Pilate's household. Then I looked at the face of the Master, clear, calm and undisturbed, as He said: "Thou couldst have no power over Me except it were given thee from above." It then seemed to me that there was something wrong about the picture and I discovered that it was misnamed. It was really Pilate before Christ. Upon my first view I had looked at the things which are seen, but my second and truer vision was of the things which are unseen.

So it is in all life. There are certain things which make their immediate impression upon us, the details of our living, our momentary interests, our temporary judgments, the things which are seen. But back and beyond these are the great truths which we have come to know, the splendid endeavours to which we have pledged ourselves, the ultimate aims of our lives, our hopes, our deeper impulses, our abiding inspirations; these remain very much in the realm of the unseen. Yet these are the real sources of our life and power.

We need to witness both the seen and the unseen. We must not be mere distant dreamers on the one hand, or mere thoughtless actors on the other. But our greatest danger is that we

shall not see into the background of the picture and discover the meaning of life. The need of most of us is of more distance and depth. We use the word "reality" as though it related only to those things which are seen and may be handled, while the truth is that the profound and ultimate realities are not the things seen and temporal but the unseen and eternal.

In considering these unseen backgrounds of life two elements seem to cover them. First, there is the spirit which animates and then there is the ideal towards which we are approaching.

In the letter to the Hebrews the writer tells us that Moses wrote as seeing the invisible. So it is with us. We live our truest life, we are our highest selves, we do our finest deeds, under the light and impulse of our vision of the unseen. The true measure of our life lies in our apprehension of its background. Our true understanding of our own souls is reached when we go back of effects to causes, behind events to their meanings, beyond incidents to principles, from facts to truths.

When we come to look at the deepest things they are all invisible. There is the energy that creates and sustains the universal order. There are our human personalities, our minds, our souls, our affections, all that is most real is the unseen. Our human life almost reaches a mis-

erable drudgery unless we witness its divine, eternal meaning.

Our duties, our deeds of service, our patient toil, our cares, these are the foregrounds of life, the things that are seen. They wait to be illumined by the sunlight upon the mountains of the unseen background of inspiration and abiding impulse.

Take motherhood for an example. It is little but care, trouble and even menial service, it is full of little but haunting dread even from its first intimations, unless over the mother is the angel of annunciation and unless the mother becomes thus a holy mother.

Everywhere we see the truth of this paradox. With only the sight of the visible, life is dark. The light of life comes from the unseen. But when life is looked at in this way it becomes so radiant with its invisible, inherent beauty, that "the meanest flower that blows can give thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Thus the true measure of ourselves, of our fellow men, and of the great causes and movements of our humanity, are gained as we are able to look away from the foreground into the realm of the unseen. We must discover the spirit which animates and the ideal which directs, and draws and lures us onward.

By this measure must we judge ourselves, according to the utterance of Jesus, remembering

that God knoweth our hearts. Our life is infinitely more than the outward actions which appear in its foreground; it is in the intent, the motive, the spirit. It does not exist in the activity of the immediate moment, but in the guiding star in the East of some ideal which we are following, in the background of our living.

Are my thoughts pure, are my motives unselfish, is my purpose lofty, yea, if I am heaping coals of fire on my brother's head am I doing it only for the sake of scorching him, in rendering my benevolence am I doing it because of its comfortable feeling? This should be the searching method of our introspective judgment.

This searching method, on the other hand, is also full of encouragement and uplift as we let the lights pass over from humility and confession to prophecy and aspiration. Perhaps we have been misjudged by our fellow men. We are conscious of lofty intent and of unselfish spirit. Then the apparent foreground of our failure recedes into the unseen background of success.

Character, some one has said, is the sum of all our choices. But it is just as true, yes, truer, that our choices are the issue of character. We need to be ever getting behind the foreground of action into this background of character. Our outwardly noble actions are not noble unless they express a great and good nature. The smiles of our lips are as bad as lies unless they

express the kindness of our hearts; our utterances, indignant though they may be, against unrighteousness, are themselves unrighteous unless they proceed from hearts that are on fire. The gifts of our apparent kindness bring us no return unless they come from generous, unselfish spirits.

Sincerity then is the harmony between the seen and the unseen. It is bad enough if the things we do are wrong, but it is worse if the background of their spirit is not right. "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?"

In the same way that we thus judge ourselves, so we must measure our fellow men. We need to remember that we only see this foreground of men's lives. Some of the greatest tragedies in the world are the tragedies of misunderstanding. We see men perhaps only as weak, blundering, failing men. Perhaps, however, they are like the man in the forest trying to find his way, going in many circles, falling many times, yet in his unseen heart is the light of the home that he is seeking, the light which he has lost for a little time.

We all need to remember that "there is so much bad in the best of us and so much good in the worst of us," that while it is right to rebuke evil, we should never do it without seeking to transform it into good. We need to learn to get

back of the seen to the unseen in our judgment of men.

The saddest of our human failures to-day is our estimate of modern causes and movements. We hear a great babel of voices, but they are like the tongues at Pentecost; each man speaks his own dialect, no one of them utters the whole gospel, yet they are all seeking to express one and the same ideal.

This is especially true in the growing relations of this democracy of ours. We must keep in mind two elements. First, the ultimate purpose, intent and ideal. We must keep this clear of the immediate means and methods by which men so blunderingly seek the attainment of those ideals.

There is the great mob of people before the palace of the Czar of all the Russians. To the ordinary onlooker it is simply a mob to be subdued. So thinks that blind ruler. But he who is gifted with the eye and sense of prophecy can look into the background and witness the pent-up indignation of a wronged and oppressed people.

This is the way in which we must look at all our social movements. It is the duty of those, who are called to guide them, first to understand their spirit, and then to guide them towards their higher ideals. Most men and women, as they look upon human society, see only the man with the muck-rake. If they would look beyond into

the unseen they would witness a crown suspended over his head.

I stood one afternoon in one of London's busy thoroughfares. The sound of distant and approaching fife and drum fell upon my ears. The passers-by ceased for a moment in their hurried pace, and we saw, marching up the broad and busy street, with their Scriptural banners, the blue-bonneted women and the uniformed men of the Salvation Army. A ludicrous and ridiculous scene! So thought those men and women who stood about me. They saw in that procession only an insignificant body of uncultured and uncouth men and women. They have nothing to bestow upon them but a patronizing, condescending smile, either of pity or disdain.

But I thank God I had at least enough of the gift of prophecy and true perspective to behold that scene with other and with very different eyes. I saw their place in a magnificent procession two thousand years in length, in the grand army of the saints, the martyrs, the spiritual warriors, and the holy men of God, a legion that enrolls the highest names of history. I saw the transformed Augustine, the golden-tongued Chrysostom, the heroic Savonarola, the self-sacrificing Francis of Assisi, the good and brave John Bunyan, stern, strong Oliver Cromwell, Baxter of Kidderminster, Thomas Chalmers, Frederick Maurice, Frederick

W. Robertson, and a myriad of other great and holy men. My mind carried me on up to the leaders of that magnificent march, and I beheld the impulsive Peter, the loving John, Paul of Tarsus, and their simple, stately colleagues. And finally, at the head of the host no man can number, was the supreme personage of history and more, the Son of God, in His transfiguration glory, with garments as the light, shining with the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Again I retraced that long line. I looked once more at that band of resolute men and good women marching up Regent Street amid the smiles of those affably scornful men and women. I saw in them lives that had been transformed by Jesus Christ, spending themselves to uplift men ; women, daughters of the people and daughters of God, who go about the haunts of that great city, by day and by night, serving and uplifting their fallen and their falling sisters. The grotesque was all obliterated. Beheld in the light of its real significance the scene was a sublime one, beautiful and full of dignity. They were men and women seeking with Jesus Christ to help and save their very scorners. I recognized their place in a great historic pageant. It gave another picture to me than to the shopping women and busy men of Oxford Street. I witnessed their true dignity as disciples of Jesus of Nazareth.

There they are, they do their work, mighty, magnificent, heroic, full of a pathetic goodness. The great world of London knows them not, though they be its saviours, or knows them only by a mocking nod, a pitying or disdainful glance. Thus we have witness of the supreme necessity of a correct perspective.

When they had passed on, and the people by me had forgotten that they were, I thought still longer upon the inner meaning of the episode. The things that were interpret those that are. History is repetition, and the meaning of the present is best seen in the outcome of past movements. The pages of history unrolled themselves. Back three hundred years, another band of very simple men, unknown at first to the world in which they lived. When known, known only to deride and persecute. Driven to Holland, ostracized by English civilization, forced to brave the billows of the angry ocean in a frail craft. Unknown, unheeded, or malignantly pursued in that day. Forgotten in this day by the mass of men, excepting a few students of historic annals. I beheld them in their true dignity and greatness, bequeathing the only conscience England has, and giving to the world—America.

A few more pages back, another host, hiding in Roman caves and catacombs. Scorned while few, persecuted when many, growing like the mustard seed and the kingdom of heaven, until

the Roman world was theirs, though they were dead of hunger, torture and neglect.

Pursuing the path of this world's chronicles still farther I saw a little handful of fishermen and publicans, unregarded and unknown by their state, except by a few petty magistrates and policemen. So insignificant that only one contemporary historian gives them note, and he but one short line. But their message has transformed the world. These are but instances out of the multitude of their kind. I was back again to the beginning of the great procession, to the starting-point and personage of this score of centuries. Out there in a desert, alone on a mountainside, without a place to lay His head, praying in the solitude of the garden, sought only seldom by a throng, which waited only for a moment and then went away to return no more until it came to cry that He be crucified, speaking mostly to that dozen fishermen and publicans, moves the majestic form of the Son of God, dropping from His lips eternal truths, that have made subsequent moral history, living a life that by its holy grandeur has transformed humanity. While yonder is Herod, busy with his dances and his card parties, Cæsar with his plots and plans, Pilate with his petty intrigues, the busy men of Jerusalem, too hurried like the strenuous business men and the feverous, frivolous women of to-day, too preoccupied to give Him heed, except as a

mild and harmless fanatic whom they never would have disturbed but for a few blind, hot-headed Jews. These are but epitomes of history. It has ever thus gone on; it goes on to-day, repeating its blind and stupid errors.

On every hand to-day, in the movements of the social order, we may witness many wrong means and methods in the foreground, but we should also try to see into the background of the spirit behind them, of the splendid ideals of justice and righteousness waiting to be interpreted and properly expressed. Most men and women look simply at the foreground, condemning the immediate cause, while the greater task is to recognize and bring out the true spirit and ideal.

This is the way in which we must interpret humanity and take the measure of all human life. This is our true place in the universe, to work with God, turning hatred into love, turning falsehood into truth.

"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." All men and all human movements are the garments of the divine Spirit. They all make many errors and yet all uprisings are upliftings. So while we condemn, if we must, the foreground of men's failing means and methods, let us also exalt and bring out the background of the spirit and ideal.

Mankind is not, on the whole, a child of the

evil one whom God is trying to steal. Mankind are the children of God upon whom Satan has laid his hand, as he sought to do with Jesus, "for a season."

There are many lessons to learn from this thought. We should cultivate the duty of looking for the best. We must look for the best in ourselves, in our better prophecies and our higher impulses. We must ever be seeking the best in others and idealize for them if they will not idealize for themselves. As Frederick W. Robertson put it, we must learn to find "the soul of goodness in things evil." Thus only shall we be able to draw out the best in ourselves and in other men; thus only shall we be able to guide the movements of mankind towards their ultimate ideal.

We should nurture the finest in our humanity and never break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax. Here is the secret of a true optimism. It is not blind, it only seems blind because it sees more. It witnesses not only the foreground of the seen but the background of the unseen.

The world is growing better, as we look from the foreground of the present into the background of space and time, from the foreground of the immediate and direct into the background of the general and universal, out of the past and the present into the background of the ages. Thus

it is that we may witness the hope of the future. We must look out upon the landscape and not at the few broken trees at our feet.

All human life is full of beauty, if we only cultivate this art of seeing it, and our experience will be that of Jacob; we shall say again and again, "Surely the Lord is in this place but I knew it not." And even if we do not find all life a holy place, we shall find, at least, many Alpine shrines along the way. In the Father's house on earth there are thus many mansions.

The world is very like a great cathedral with its many chapels, if we but discover them. Only by thus seeing life shall we come to make it so. This great optimism of faith must have three ultimate objects,—self, humanity and God.

We must believe in God, that we live in a divine order even though He moves in a mysterious way.

Our faith in self, while not vain and presumptuous, should be real, knowing as we do that we have within ourselves the prophecies of ever better things.

We must believe in mankind because they are God's children waiting to be uplifted. Thus only is it good to live, to love, to hope, to work, to sacrifice and to wait.

The shepherds in the fields heard the song of the host in the Syrian sky, but the busy men and women in the inn did not hear it. Thus may

God and man work together as truth springs up out of the earth and righteousness looks down from heaven.

I love to look at that statue of John Bunyan in the park at Bedford with its inscription, "His eyes uplift to heaven, he stood as one who pleaded with men."

To bring God down to man, to lift man up to God, this is the work of our Christian service. We may even learn to love men, not only for what they are, but because of our faith in what they are to be. We may look at our humanity as I look at my boy, sometimes in his willful wrong-doing. We may even love them for what they might be. He alone who thus lives as seeing the invisible can face the saddest of human realities with the undying faith and hope of an unquenchable affection.

We then, that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. The mission of the Christian Church is not to separate the good from the bad; it is to bring the latent prophecies in mankind to their fulfillment.

Religion is not only a reverence for God, it is reverence for His children, the reverence of ministry and service, the sense of the sacred worth of the human soul. It is listening to the voice of Jesus, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." One of the most beautiful scenes in the

life of Jesus was that upon the cross, when He looked down and prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

I met a blind man the other day, and as I helped him across the busy street, and asked him about his blindness, he said, "No, I am not wholly blind, but I can see only the things at my feet." So it is with many men and women. They see only the foreground at their very feet.

"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth." In this the Master prayed that men, that human causes, that the movements of mankind, should learn to view life from above, the world as part of God's moral order, investing life with its divine meaning and seeing it in the sunlight of the Father's face. Approaching things from within, touching them with the heart and its affections and then directing man, guiding causes, molding the movements of mankind, in the direction of their spiritual ends.

Let us not forget this great sacred journey of life itself in the little incidents that happen by the way. Let us not keep our eyes so close to the little wayside stones that we shall forget to watch the beauteous twilight colours on the white Alpine hills. For when the sight of life's background is lost, its foreground is vain and has no meaning or intent.

Every city in which men live out their life has ts mirage of prophetic beauty, and to every city

of men there is a corresponding Holy City in the mind and heart of the Infinite.

It is only as we come to see it, as we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen, that we become ourselves and become equal to the uplifting of our fellow men.

"A City throned upon the height behold,
The City of Man's Life fulfilled in God.
Bathed all in light, with open gates of Gold,
Perfect that city is in tower and street.
An Angel stands its occupant to greet.
Still shine, O patient City on the height.
The while our Race in hut and hovel dwells
It hears the music of thy bells
And its dull soul is haunted by thy light.
So once the Son of Man hath heard thy call,
And the Lord Christ hath claimed thee for us all."

The Culture of Self

VIII

ACQUIREMENT BY RENUNCIATION

THE law of compensation is one that is not easy to apply universally and yet one which finds a multitude of simple illustrations ever at hand. The profoundest application of that law is found in the teaching of Jesus that acquirement comes through renunciation. "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it," says the Master. He then asks the question, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Among the most significant of the operations in the universal order is that of convertibility. The relations of the universe are reciprocal. There is a divine law of exchange, in perpetual operation, by which all giving is receiving and all receiving is giving. There is no acquirement without renunciation, no renunciation without acquirement. Nothing is ever gained without giving up something; nothing can be relinquished without gaining something. Somewhat similar to the natural law of indestructibility, we have, in the moral order, this law of compensation.

The sphere of human life is one vast market-place; everything is under the law of exchange. Everything has its price. In it, there is no receiving without giving, no gain without loss, no acquirement without renunciation. You cannot get something for nothing. Whatever you get you must pay for, and every spiritual possession has its value in material terms.

For example, if you would gain wealth you must renounce intellectual culture. You cannot be an operator in Wall Street and be engaged in intellectual research at the university. You cannot obtain intellectual culture without renouncing wealth. If you would have renown you must renounce leisure. If you desire a quiet life you must give up public honour. If you wish physical vigour you must renounce indulgence. If you would enjoy physical gratification you must give up strength and health of body. If you would know the meaning of the home you must give up the life of the club.

While it is true that there is mediation in all this, it still remains true that you are always gaining the one at so much loss of the other. Nothing is ever gained without the loss of something else. We find what seems to be an eternal law of inevitable exchange. Every moral act is a decision to give up something and to gain something else.

The universe and its human life resolve them-

selves into two elements. We call them matter and spirit. Life has two forms, the material and the spiritual. These moral transactions in the market-place of life consist of some exchange of the one for the other, of God for mammon or of mammon for God. We cannot serve both.

Moral retrogression is the exchange of the spiritual for the material. Moral evolution is the exchange of the material for the spiritual. It does not change this law if we use other language in describing it and speak of transforming the material into the spiritual or of making the material a garment of the spirit. All moral gain involves some material loss, and on every hand, as we view the world, we see men either buying divine birthrights for messes of pottage or getting messes of pottage in exchange for their birthrights.

Every moral attainment, every spiritual acquirement, has its market price in material terms. Every moral decision involves the saving of life by losing it or the losing of life by saving it. Every moral act is the giving of something in exchange for the soul or gaining the soul in exchange for something else. Here is money! What is its moral use and value? Does it not consist in its renouncement? We exchange it for a book, some sublime sonnet or the utterance of some great philosopher. We send it to India or to China to be used for the saving of the race.

This illustrates the continuous moral exchange that enters into every act of moral progress. We get money for the sake of giving it up, if we view it rightly.

This truth of Jesus leads us into a question which often troubles us. Are material blessings proportional to spiritual merit? Job's friends wrestled with the problem for him and their poor miserable philosophy would not adjust itself to the facts of life. So the Psalms finally had to put the reward over into the future.

Is there any rule by which men who serve God are sure of gaining material prosperity? Is physical ease gained by spiritual devotion? The facts betray no such law. Will applause sound in the ears of honour? Can a man make the most money by being honest or by cheating? Very often by being dishonest? Do good people suffer less than bad people? We certainly cannot see that they do. In fact, the experience of the psalmist seems universal. It is the strength of the wicked that seems firm. They are not in trouble as other men. Their eyes stand out with success. Neither are they plagued as other men. They have more than heart could wish.

Take the moral problems of any community and witness the application of the psalmist's complaint. This at least we can see, that spiritual excellencies do not involve material bless-

ings. If there is any rule, it is that spiritual attainment is always gained by material loss.

If there are apparent objections to this statement, it is because we need to remember that we are speaking of those material things which stand in the way of spiritual life. This Gospel of Jesus is not a plea for voluntary asceticism. Jesus was never disturbed by the sad doubts of the psalmist. His clear spiritual eye saw the great principles of life beneath it all. Jesus called His disciples and made them many promises, but He never mentioned ease, luxury, or material gifts. What was His prophecy? He said that they were to be blessed, but it was when men should revile and persecute them. Material things would be in the way and they might need to cut off the right hand or pluck out the right eye. They must lose concern for earthly treasures. Spiritual advance was by what He called a straight and narrow way. The Gospel was a pearl of so great price that one must be willing to give for it all that he possessed. He promised His disciples a hundredfold reward, but He added, "with persecutions." He bequeathed them peace, but it was *His* peace, not as the world.

His prophecy became realization; His disciples found it so. His disciples have ever found it so. Read the eternal lessons of saintly biography. You find devotion to the truth paid for by the persecution of men. Saints are at the

stake, holy men are hiding in caves or fastened in the stocks; pilgrims of heaven have little but their pilgrim's staff and beggar's bowl. They gained their hundredfold reward with persecutions. They took the eternal prize but they all paid the price.

The life of Jesus is ever the illustration of His truth. He made the bargain in the wilderness of temptation. The twofold opportunities were set before Him. His answer was that He would take the cross and the kingdom of heaven. Saviours of the world since Him have been called to make the exchange of Calvary, according to their measure.

Men and women complain that if they work in a noble cause they only invite criticism, censure, opposition, and persecution. It is so within the Church of Christ. They constantly tell us that the high callings are underpaid. It is true. A bartender who can make certain complicated combinations is paid much higher than the best of school-teachers. Men are complaining that the ministry is unremunerative. There is no doubt but what it is true. They say further that the nobler and braver the man the more he suffers and the less he gets. In civic life the demagogues get the praise and the reformers get something else.

This is all true. There is no use in evading it but it is simply a question:—Which will you

have; the Cross with Jesus Christ or a supper with Pilate? Shall it be honour or money? It is the opportunity of sharing the prison with John the Baptist or being with Herod at his dance. It is Barabbas or Christ, the Golden Rule or the rule of gold. Every man is called upon to stand before Jesus, as did the rich young man in the story, and many of them go away sorrowful. The ultimatum of Jesus was a willingness to renounce all.

We must, however, not fail to see the prize as well as the price. The disciple Peter, who so often spoke first and thought afterwards, once impulsively said to the Master, "Lo, we have left all and followed Thee." What was the all? So far as we know, it was a few old boats and fish-nets. What did he gain? The keys of the kingdom of heaven from the pierced hands of his Lord.

Judas made the other decision. His gain was thirty pieces of silver but what did he give for it?

The prize and the price; the prize is honour, self-respect, manhood, character; the price anything that these cost. We cannot have the prize without the price any more than we can be, at one and the same time, honourable and dishonourable, brave and craven. The prize is the soul, the price whatever the soul is worth.

This need be no specious plea for the advan-

tages of poverty. I love to see business men engaged in their honourable and profitable business. I love to see wage earners getting together for more pay. This truth of Jesus does not set aside the gaining of money by toil and service. It raises the question as to what money is for. The meat is necessary to the life but the life is more than meat.

Nor is this a plea for the equalization of wealth. There is no doubt but what some men are better fitted to distribute wealth than others. There are two sad classes of humanity: those who worship the mammon that they possess and those who worship the mammon which other men possess.

It is a question of exchange. We must not overlook, as we bear our losses, this law of compensation. Besides the men and women of unblushing selfishness on the one hand and of petulant complaint on the other, there is a third class of whom there are too few in our day. They are those who can find the medium of reasonable content, who would learn that the real things of life are the unsullied conscience, sympathetic heart, the affection of the home, the joy of service.

There is an adjustment between material possessions and heavenly treasures, but it is a straight and narrow way and few are they who find it. On the one hand, there is the unhappy home of

selfish luxury and on the other the unhappy abode of pinched faces and starved forms. Somewhere there is a balance between the life and the meat, between self-culture and self-preservation and service.

In the last analysis, however, the law of Jesus is true. In His divine providence, God often illustrates it by His apparent exceptions. Here is some man whom we know who has deserved honour paid him by his fellow men. Go back into his life a little and you may find that he has paid for it by suffering. Perhaps men did not always give him their honour but their cold disdain.

The best example of this law of exchange is in the home. Here it is perhaps the giving up of the ease, complacency, luxury of the man in his club for the anxiety, distress, and care of the father in his household. Here we have the paradox illustrated; the joy of suffering or the happiness of sacrifice. The home is a sovereign example of this law of compensation between the material and the spiritual—the acquirement of truth, joy, happiness, and peace by the renunciation of self, comfort, and material content. In no other realm do we discover that we find life by losing it as we do in our homes. True parents are continually cutting off something for the sake of their children. It is an example of the loss of the world and the gaining of the soul.

We must not forget to put the law the other

way. We never can relinquish the material and not gain the spiritual. Our real happiness is determined by our attitude, whether it be that of regretfully watching things that recede or keeping our eyes fixed upon the things we are gaining.

This is why some men and women learn to bear increasing burdens with an ever-sweeter spirit. It is often possible to gain something of the unconcern of Jesus, who was the same Jesus whether at the dinner of the Pharisee or appeasing His hunger by plucking the ears of corn in the fields. This splendid balance can only come from the consciousness of this divine compensation.

Nor is this a religion of unhappiness. When is the parent happiest; when he is buying something for himself or for the child? Yet, when he is buying for the child he is buying still more for himself.

If it be true that self-preservation is the first law of nature, it is truer still that self-giving is the finer law of spiritual attainment.

IX

OUT OF GREAT TRIBULATION

THE book of Revelation has been trivially used, but it is not a trivial book. In language of dignity, majesty, and figurative splendour, it conveys thought of magnitude, profundity, and beauty. Almost every word in it counts. In its summing up of the ultimate order of human development, it frequently gives expression to the meaning of perplexing human experiences.

"What are these which are arrayed in white robes and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb."

In this utterance the robes of white are the symbol of refinement; tribulation is the human experience of discipline; the blood of the lamb is the spirit of the Son of Man. The meaning is that refinement of character is made in the crucible of experience.

In our moments of trivial meditation it sometimes looks to us as though life would assume perfection if it were only a more comfortable order. We are dwelling much on this to-day.

There are two types of character to shun : one is that of selfish and unconcerned content ; the other is that of misguided philanthropic sympathy.

There is no doubt a good deal of hypocrisy and cant uttered by those who look out upon the world in soft raiment from kings' palaces and bid it be content in its suffering and resigned to its wretchedness.

Yet it is, as George A. Gordon has said, a profound fact of human existence that our deepest human interests are at one and the same time our most treasured possessions and our dearest burdens. The things that bring the deepest joys may also convey the keenest sorrows. The same thing may be the source of our delight and of our distress.

We delight in it because it makes life rich and full. It is our anxiety and distress because it is so fragile and may so easily slip away. Our human life is like the evasive sunlight on a cloudy day. Take, for example, the joy of the parent in the child ; at its best and noblest its every moment is filled with the presentiment of fear and the portent of disaster, beginning back at the very first prophetic sense of motherhood. The child becomes the perpetual anxiety of the mother, and the mother is the serious solicitude of the father, long before the infant sees the light of day. This is but a figure of the days to come,

and this experience is but the symbol of all human experience. There is, then, this great fact of existence upon which hangs the very thread of life. Give the man his highest joy and you may also be handing him his deepest sorrow.

Common and universal as is this experience there are, however, two contrasting ways of viewing it. There is no moral difference between men that is so great. On the one hand, the man is thinking how pleasant and beautiful; or, how hard and dark this is! Other men do not so impress us. They seem above and beyond mere questions of content or pain, beyond desire for pleasure as such, or complaint of suffering in itself. Some men and women are always like a child, asking, "Will it hurt?" while to others the question seldom seems to come. We have here another of those illuminating examples of the truth of Jesus, that he who would save his life loses it and he who will lose it saves it.

Here is the man who is eternally asking, Am I as happy as I ought to be? Will this make me happy? Am I appreciated or am I misjudged? Am I in health or am I in danger of contagion? He loses the very thing he seeks, in grasping for it. How clear it is that self-forgetfulness is the truest self-realization. How true that our larger joys are in the realm of the unconscious.

Thus there is no wider difference between men

than their contrasting attitude towards the ministry of tribulation. Refinement of the human character and spirit is in the crucible of its experience. The strength and the dignity of personality is in direct proportion to the intensity of moral struggle.

This ministry of tribulation comes in a myriad of forms. In the first place, it may be in the bearing of the burdens of life, the overworked body, hard circumstances.

Then to them that hath is given, and the men who can bear their own burdens bravely are those who become the bearers of the burdens of other men.

Take the man of ease and comfort and he is apt to be a man of grudging sympathy. The burdens of life increase upon those who are strong by an alternating evolution. The law rises and those who bear their own burdens are those who fulfill the law of Christ in bearing one another's. The larger the man the greater the burden that comes to him, while the more he bears the less conscious he is of its weight.

Thus we are led into this complex law that the finer, nobler, deeper the person becomes, the deeper are the waters of tribulation which open before him.

Take for example the conscientious pursuance of duty, the daring procedure of initiative action, with its attendant resistance. The easy way of

life is that of compliance and expediency; the avoidance of pain is the evasion of consequences. It is a sad and glorious story from the days of the prophets to our own day. Elijah's income is reduced to the providence of ravens and poor widows. The world, age after age, has been a Jerusalem stoning those sent unto her. Great messages come to deaf ears, visions of truth to blind eyes, noble calls to faltering feet.

But this is just as glorious as it is sad, for, over against this background, witness the light on the pages of history. Who are these saviours of the world pictured to-day upon the pages of biography in robes of white? These are they which came out of great tribulation. They came out of disloyalty, disappointment, and defeat, out of coldness, censoriousness, criticism, and contempt; out of resistance, recrimination, and reproach. The light shining upon the darkness of the world is from their souls.

Let us take something nearer to us, of our common heritage of suffering, anxiousness, solicitude. How it spells those other words in the lexicon of life, sympathy, sacrifice, affection, patience, calmness, if we only let it write these names on our foreheads.

Yea, even peace. For he who foregoes the anxious cares, the danger of loss, the hours of trembling fear, he who has never known the suspense of awaiting the verdict of the doctor, has

never held his ear to listen for the breathing of the little child, who has escaped the vigils of the night, has seldom known, or realized, or deepened into all its finer meaning the glorious self-forgetfulness of human affection.

Phillips Brooks has put it beautifully in another analogy from the book of Revelation, "The sea of glass mingled with fire." The sea of glass is the type of repose, rest, peace, but it is mingled with the fire of trial and struggle. Repose mingled with conflict. Fire, the symbol of the process of refinement, and through the mingling of the fire the transparent beauty of the glass. Calmness pervaded by discipline, so that we may even say, "It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all."

The moral danger of life is not adversity. The spiritual peril of existence is our thoughtless, selfish prosperity. As the seer of Patmos has said again, "Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of God." The word pillar in the original is a word signifying the sense of unusual strength and power.

This truth points out the way in which to meet tribulation. Never by the answer of despair. The sad wastes of human life are among those in whom deep does not answer unto deep. Never by the stoic answer of indifference, the hardening of the heart, the dulling of affection. Never by the Epicurean avoidance of pain and seeking of

pleasure. The saddest of men are those who seek to drown their fate, their sorrow, their disappointment, for in drowning their disasters they inundate themselves. The world is full of men and women who seek escape from death by suicide.

Let us cease asking, Will I be happy? Let us stop putting the question, Shall I get credit? Let us cease our inquiry, Will this minister to my own culture? He only is happy who does not think of being happy. Thus, we may even learn the gracious receiving of abuse with an ever sweeter spirit. In the hour of the world's clamour we may find the eternal sphere of silence. Let patience do her perfect work of strength, let sympathy wait on sorrow and affection deepen with the touch of service. Let us not reverse God's order, nor let the deeper need of life find answer in increasing weakness, but rather, go from strength to strength.

One of the greatest of arts is the gentle art of non-resistance, the turning of the other cheek, that with the psalmist we may say, "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

"They have washed their robes in the blood of the lamb." These words bring us to the secret of it all. He walked upon that sea of glass mingled with fire. Nowhere in human life has this ever been so true as in Him. Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Shall tribulation, distress, or persecution? Nay, in all these things, we may be more than conquerors. We may then train our ears to hear His voice: "Let not your heart be troubled."

Do you not feel this as the writer has felt it? Sometimes he has wished for a pastorate that had no problems, has wished that the home might be free from its anxious distractions, and that human life might be relieved of its disturbing cares. Sometimes it seems as though we might then move on and upward, if there were not so much resistance to overcome. But this is the mood of peevish complaint.

The background of the mystery we may not altogether penetrate. The wicket gate is still beyond our clear sight. The clouds will always obscure, but at least in this truth we may discern the direction of the light and the clouds themselves may even reveal the sunlight that is beyond us.

X

GOING BEYOND DUTY

JESUS always spoke of human life in a divine language. He discussed temporal things in eternal terms of speech. For the most trivial duties He gave the profoundest principles. For all common, practical living He bore witness to ideal visions.

The Gospel of John has given us many of these spiritual ideals in philosophic form. The Gospel of Luke, in contrast, tells much about our moral living and gives us a plan of action. Yet behind Luke there are always great principles of life as deep as eternity itself.

The gospel attributed to the pen of the beloved physician reveals to us some of the Master's difficulties in molding the ethics of his day. Those difficulties, strange to say, were not with the sinners and the publicans. They were with the moral leaders of his day, the Scribes and the Pharisees. He had his chief controversies with those men who were self-satisfied because of their moral attainment. Therefore the third gospel, with this subjective influence, has many such passages as this one, "For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that

humbleth himself shall be exalted." And again, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have only done that which it was our duty to do."

It is said that, in our day and generation, there is, among those counted to be religious, a loss in the sense of sin. Yet it is easier to-day to bring a flagrant sinner to see the power of the Gospel than it is to bring religious men and women to comprehend its depth and height.

This human society of ours is pervaded with self-satisfaction. We hear men say things like this: I do about as near right as I can. My conscience is clear. They can say this because they have a very moderate sense of what is right, they have a tempered idea of obligation, they need a finer and more sensitive conscience.

The difference between Jesus and the other masters of ethics is that His Gospel is the purest of idealism. Christian attainment, according to the Master of Christianity, is the pursuit of a flying goal. Jesus took the satisfactory moral standards of the ethical leaders and teachers of His day to the mountain of transfiguration, and shed upon them the light of His self-sacrificing idealism. It was not enough even that men should do their duty.

By the word duty we generally mean the requirements of society or of our class in society.

We mean that which constitutes what might be called the ordinary, or average, conscience. At most we mean a conformity to strict right and rigid justice.

According to Jesus the ultimate principle of man's life is in its unseen motives; the ideal which is his guiding standard, not a performance of immediate obligations, but his vision of something beyond, ever better than he is; not his immediate action, but the larger light which he is pursuing. According to the Gospel, moral progress is not simply meeting the demands of conscience. It is infinitely more. It is the acquirement of an ever finer conscience. It is not the reaching of an ideal. It is the constant witnessing of another and a better vision beyond.

The largeness of a man's life is determined by the way in which he measures it, whether by the general consent and the contentment of his fellow men, or by the moral demands of Jesus.

The significance of the Master as a moral teacher is just here. He takes our moderate moral ideas and lifts them to divine ideals. He gives us a higher law than that of satisfying conscience. It is the law of an ever new and better conscience itself. "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." Thus the cross of Christ, which is the symbol of a Christian ethic, is infinitely beyond the moral codes which men make daily.

The human conscience is generally conformed to a certain standard of action. Jesus' law is the impulse of spiritual being. Conscience is conformity to law and strict duty. The law of Christ is conformity to an unmeasured love and sacrifice. Thus a man's life rises according to the increasing measure of his standard and not by the fulfilling of his standard; it is determined not by meeting the demands of his conscience, but by the growing measure of that conscience itself.

One's moral valuation is determined by whether he contrasts himself with those below him, forgetting the inequalities of start, and thanks God that he is not as other men are; with those upon his own level and congratulates himself that he is no worse than other men; or by the standard of Christ, witnessing how far he is from being Christlike.

We do not begin our moral progress until we know our own worth. We do not move onward until our worth recedes in view of the better that we might be. Moral evolution is the pursuit of an ever flying goal. It is like the ascent of the mountain, the higher we go up the larger becomes our view. Our duties are ever expanding upon the face of the scene of life, the goal ever recedes as we approach it, goodness grows larger as we draw near to it. Thus it is that the holiest of saints have ever been the humblest of sinners. We may pray at the close

of the day, "I have done my duty; bless and reward me, my Father" or we may better pray, "I have only done my duty; lift me higher upon the morrow and reveal to me the larger duties which I have not done." Yet how often we permit ourselves, with the air of relief, the sense of attainment, the spirit of complacency, to say, "I have done my duty by him."

First of all, is it ever true, even at a moderate, average estimate? Of course, it depends upon the ideal of duty, but, as commonly conceded, have we ever met our obligations? Suppose one could say, "My present moral debts are paid." How about the sins of youth? We cannot go before our Maker as we would to the storekeeper and pay him this year's debts, receiving our release when we have not paid them for the last year.

Do we ever return the good and the kindness that we have received from the parents and the teachers of our youth? Can the one ever return all that he has received from the many? If we say, "I am now keeping the commandments," how about those that were broken in days gone by? Are we ever square with the world, in view of the misspent years which can never be regained? Is it not clear that our moral debts are never paid except by the forgiving grace of both God and fellow men? Without this are not our lives left with eternal moral voids?

It may be that some higher lives seem to give more than they receive, but at least with most of us restitution in quantity is out of the question.

We are doing something good now, but we ought to do that even if we had never done anything wrong before. Thus, according to the law, this day's good deed fills its own measure, but not the void of yesterday's neglect. Thus every one of us must avail himself of an atonement and become a child of grace.

Sit down some time and let pass before your eyes the past that never can return. Its evil deeds, its procession of neglects, the multitude of its wrong thoughts and unjust judgments. Just witness the amount of time that we all spend in repairing our misguided lives. Each day, according to strict moral law, ought to be occupied in the new and immediate duty of the present. Is it not absurd for any one of us to suppose that we can catch up with time? No, there is always the great wide desert of the past which no remorse can recall, no present goodness can undo. No one of us can stand upon his record before God. We need an atonement.

But suppose even that the past may be wiped out, suppose according to the measure of the world we may say, "I am now doing my duty." Is even this the extent of moral obligation? Not according to the ideal of Jesus. Let us grant that all our past debts are paid and we are now

doing right. Even this, according to Jesus, is merely the starting-point and not the goal. If it might have been the goal of yesterday, it has moved on to-day.

By the Master's law there is no real merit in moral debt paying. We must go beyond strict moral obligation to free self-giving. Thus if all the other men in the world could say to you, "I have received my rights," it would not be enough.

Suppose it were the quality of generosity. Some one asks you, "Are you generous?" and you answer, "Yes, I pay all my debts." Would not this be a poor, haggard generosity? So in the moral realm there are no bounds to duty. He who asks with Peter, "How many times shall I forgive?" has failed to catch the spirit of Christ. There is only one man who has committed the unpardonable sin and who is irrevocably lost. It is the man whose moral sense and development have been arrested, who wraps himself in the soft garments of content and says, "I have done my duty; my conscience is clear." Such a man may feel the gaze of his fellow men without the sense of abasement, but he does not feel the eye of God. He may have comprehended the law of Sinai, but he has not seen Calvary, or Christ, or heard His voice. He may have seen the right which he has done, but he has not seen the wrong which he might have prevented. Men

have quarrelled over the doctrine of atonement, and yet every man must say, I cannot stand on my own merit; some one else must fill my moral voids that I may stand before God.

Spiritual attainment is arrested at the point where we may say at the close of the day, "I have earned my rest because I have done my duty." We ought to say, "I will rest this night for my unfinished task to-morrow."

Duty then must be left behind as we enter upon the paths of self-sacrifice. We must be willing not only to meet our obligations but to give even more than we can spare. We must do more than bear our own burdens; our hearts must be heavy with the burdens of others. We must not only repair our own wrongs but those of other men and pay the portion of others who cannot or who will not. This is the joy of the cross.

Just imagine Jesus saying, "I have done My duty." We cannot think it of Him. Not until He went to the cross could He say, "It is finished." He demands more of us than that we should pay up our subscriptions. Human duty cannot be kept by bookkeeping and the balancing of moral ledgers.

In the sight of God and under the sway of the cross, our moral liabilities are always large, our assets very small and only the cross of Christ can save us from insolvency. We bear no burdens

that we can ever lay down and say, "I have carried them long enough." We cannot pray, "My hour is come, I have finished the work that Thou gavest me to do, glorify me with Thine own glory."

What use is there in talking about the repayment of our wrongs, when we take into account not only the evil we do but that which we might prevent others from doing? Suppose we could repay for all the suffering we have caused. This would not answer for that which we might have assuaged and comforted.

Again, suppose God gave to us strict justice, who of us could stand? Suppose we could say, We have meted out to men due justice. Consider this, that in the course of justice none of us could see salvation. When, then, are our obligations met? Only when we have ceased to sin and have atoned for all the wrongs we ever did. Nay, not even then, for we should still say, "We are unprofitable servants, we have only done our duty." One of the most dangerous things in this world is a clear conscience. It means that conscience has lost its burden or is too weak to bear one. Even if it means that we have gone as far as Mount Sinai, we have not reached Calvary. Thus we may well reverence Kant in his magnificent Ode to Duty, but our deeper reverence is for Christ facing Jerusalem and looking towards Golgotha.

Where, then, shall we try to take our place? In contented self-delusion, in intelligent self-consciousness, or in noble self-forgetfulness? Shall we be contented with the common law of man and bear our own burdens, or shall we bend our backs to one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ? If we do the latter all the burdens of the world are ours. This seems hard, but God has provided the way. The heavier the burden the stronger grows the back to bear it. As the goal recedes the runner's speed is hastened. The finer the human conscience becomes, the stronger is it to endure.

Be not deceived. Self-satisfaction is not joy and peace. It is but a lying mask. These personalities of ours are like the widow's cruse, the more we pour ourselves out the more there is left to give. Think of it for a moment. There are the qualities of affection and sympathy. The more strong and noble things we do the more are we able to do. The more we love, the more we are capable of loving. Thus these words of Jesus are searching but not discouraging. Indeed the farther our moral goal recedes the more sure we may be that we are moving onward. This deepening sense of incompleteness means that we are more complete in the nobility of our ideals. The less feeling we have of the sense of attainment, the more certain we may be that we have seen Christ and are trying to follow Him.

XI

THE UNHEARD ANGEL

"THE people that stood by and heard it said that it thundered: others said an angel spake to Him."

The interpretation of the fourth gospel is full of difficulties. It brings up a multitude of questions; critical, psychological and philosophical. We might thus begin our consideration of this scene by discussing the nature of the incident. Was it a miracle or was the experience subjective? But I propose to illustrate a method of treating Scripture which transcends all such methods. Let us lay aside all critical problems. Let us look at the picture and behold its meaning. There is a lower and a higher criticism. The highest criticism is that which seeks the spiritual meaning.

So far as the nature of the incident is concerned, it was doubtless a reminiscence upon which the writer has laid hold, that he may use it for his spiritual lesson. These words illustrate Jesus' words in the context. He declares that the method of the salvation of the world is the principle of sacrifice. The Son of Man is to be glorified. The consummation of the ineffable

revelation is the cross; not as a scheme of reconciliation but as the revelation of self-sacrifice.

This is the order of thought. The selfish love of life is its loss. Men serve Him by following Him. Then He utters His natural prayer for life, and His responding utterance of obedience and surrender: "Father save Me from this hour." This is the voice of the human Jesus. "Nay, but for this purpose came I unto this hour." This is the response of the divine Christ. While He prays the answer comes: "This is Thy glory. Now is the prince of this world cast out." The prince of this world is human selfishness. It is cast out by human sacrifice. It surrenders to the power of a divine unfailing love.

Then the narrator gathers up the varied elements of the picture and declares the attractiveness of the cross. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." Let us try to imagine the picture. There stand the serious, inquiring Greeks and the wondering disciples. Outside their circle is the bewildered throng. The Son of Man stands in their midst, answering the supreme question of life: How is the world to be saved? Love shines in His transfigured face as He declares that it is to be saved by love; by suffering; by self-denial; by sacrifice; by the cross. As the scene becomes thus profoundly impressive; as the spirituality of this divine personality is felt; a

voice comes, as at the Baptism and the Transfiguration. Something is represented as setting upon His utterance the seal of truth in the minds of those who hear it. "Thou hast declared it; this eternal divine power is self-sacrificing love."

The Greeks, the disciples and the multitude are profoundly impressed. All realize that something has happened. The meaning varies. Some said, "It thundered." Others said, "An angel spake." Some interpreted the experience as a physical phenomenon. Others felt it as a spiritual consciousness. Some eyes could behold only the natural and material. Others could witness a spiritual vision. Some said, "It thundered." Others said, "An angel spake to Him."

Then Jesus goes on and declares the very thing which they reveal. "Walk in the light," He says. The writer then applies Isaiah's reproach: "Their eyes were holden, their ears deaf." They turned away and said, "It thundered." Others said, "Behold the truth," and lingered.

First of all, notice that this was the way of the world in Jesus' time. More important than this, however, that it is the habitual attitude of human life.

It was the way of the world in Jesus' time. A simple Hebrew boy was born in an inn. The busy men and women in the inn knew only that a Hebrew boy was born. A few shepherds on

the plain and three wise men knew what had really happened. These beautiful poetic pictures in the gospels illustrate these contrasting attitudes to Jesus throughout His life. Some said as He passed by, "He is only a poor insurrectionist." Others said, "He is a teacher come from God." Only eleven recognized Him as the Master of masters and only part of that eleven knew Him as the Saviour of the world. In history, the historian of His time refers to Him in one short line. The writer of the fourth gospel beheld His eternal meaning. So it was all along. Some said, "He is a prophet." Others said, "He is a deceiver of the people."

There He was, always the same being, with the same potent personality; uttering the same eternal truths upon the ears of all of them. Some said, "It thundered." Others said, "An angel spake."

Our main lesson, however, is to witness the prevalence of these two habitual attitudes in our own human life.

As I stood on one of the busy streets of London a little while ago, I beheld an approaching procession. It was a gathering of common horseshoers on their way to Hyde Park. As they passed by, some saw in them only a body of rough, uncouth, uncultured, misguided men, and bestowed upon them a smile of pity or disdain. Others witnessed the pathos of the scene. It

suggested the age-long struggle of mankind to better the human conditions of its weary toil. Some said, "It thundered." Others said, "An angel spake." Thus do the scenes of life in eternal contrast impress men; its cries; its woes; its groans; its sorrows; its struggles and its prophecies.

I walked the streets of historic Florence. The city was full of visitors. Some, as they walked about, marked the loftiness of its cathedral, the colour of its glass, looked for a moment on the faded frescoes of San Marco. As they walked the streets, they were nothing to them but bricks and pavements. Others could hear the voice of Savonarola. They could see his very footprints in the pavements. They breathed his spirit in San Marco. Some said, "It thundered." Others said, "An angel spake."

A little later I visited the villages of Saint Ives and Huntingdon. Some men would say that they were very common hamlets. Others could feel the very air vibrant with the spirit of Cromwell.

To change the illustration, one man passes by a great cliff of rock. It is only a piece of stone. It has no voice. It tells no story. It imparts no truth. It yields no revelation. To a scientist, however, it tells an age-long story of profoundest interest.

Thus we have witness to two contrasting habits

of life. Some eyes behold the hidden significance of things; others see only outward forms. Some men and women invest the most common things with a spiritual meaning; to others the profoundest scenes are only natural and commonplace. Some are arrested by the voice; others only hear it thunder.

To show this common twofold attitude, we might begin with the natural order. The world is full of Peter Bells.

> "A primrose by a river's brim
> A yellow primrose was to him
> And it was nothing more."

Others behold the revelations of nature with the poet's eye, "To him who in the love of nature holds communion with her visible forms, she speaks a varied language."

To some a sunset glow, the majesty of an ocean, the snow-crowned mountain, are nothing but phenomena of nature. To others every grove is a holy place, every passing beauty is a shrine like those along the Alpine roads, and every natural revelation speaks through its charm, its majesty or its gentle stillness, of another world.

This same thing is true and truer of practical life. To some men and women, home is little more than a dwelling place; marriage is a con-

venient (if not an inconvenient) way of living. The household means a necessary drudgery. The mart or shop are places for making money. Human society is little more than an aggregate of men and women. To others all are holy. Home is a sacred place; over some mothers angels bend and speak their annunciations.

> "The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting
> And cometh from afar. . . .
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home;
> Heaven lies about us in our infancy."

To such, love is a sacrament, the daily toil a joyful means of the higher ends of sacrifice; human society is God's holy family on earth.

To some most things are secular and human; to others all things are sacred and divine. The world is full of desecrated sanctuaries. Some said, "It thundered." Others said, "An angel spake."

To carry our thought still further, the religious life of man yields this contrasting material and spiritual vision. The preacher in the pulpit may be, in his way, a conscientious man. Yet his prayer may be little more than an exercise. His sermon may be the delivery of a truth as a proposition rather than the impartation of spiritual life. And I am sadly aware that very often men may

well go away and say, "It thundered." Yet there are times when they might have said, "An angel spake."

So to hearers and worshippers the reading of the Holy Scripture may impart neither instruction nor inspiration. The hymn may be neither a confession nor praise. The sermon may be only an artistic or an inartistic product. The benediction may be either a signal to depart or the gathering up of sacred feelings and experiences.

Men often go away and say it thundered, when they might have said, "God's voice spake to me this morning; in reproof of my sins, in comfort for my sorrows, in courage and hope for my discouragement and despair; in refreshment for my weariness. I beheld Christ this morning."

After all, perhaps, I have put this wrong. It does not seem the truest to say of us that some are blind and deaf while others hear it all. Both things are true of all of us. Life has both aspects, and its real moral struggle consists in this varying disposition. So, sometimes, home seems a very practical and, at other times, a very heavenly place. Some days life is nothing but a vexing problem; other days it is a sacred joy. Sometimes work is but a drudgery; again it is illuminated by a holy flame. Sometimes we treat society with a selfish attitude; at other times we are softened by the spirit of brother-

hood. Some Sundays our worship is all cold and dull; others it is a holy inspiration.

The order of life is the order of increasing spiritual light; as all the varied elements of toil, of sacrifice, of joy and sorrow gain their holier meaning and reach their mountain of transfiguration.

And yet again, I was not altogether wrong at first. It is true that there is a prevailing temper and cast of mind in every one of us, and, in the balance, some men and women are materialistic and earthly, while others by constant listening have grown quick to catch the higher notes of the universal order. Amid the same scenes, the same environments of life, some pass by and say it thundered, while others wait and listen to the angel's voice.

The meaning is this: You may give to life either its natural or its divine interpretation. It means that two of you may be living side by side, and yet living in two widely different worlds.

Some said, "It thundered." Others said, "An angel spake to Him."

XII

THE MEASURE OF RELIGIOUS AFFECTION

"JESUS saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My lambs. He saith to him the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He saith unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep."

The lesson of this dialogue is: The test of true discipleship, the nature of genuine allegiance, sincere homage, and real devotion—the true expression of a true affection for Christ. It is not my intent to disparage the worship of Christ or the confessions of His name, but to indicate the ultimate mode which their expression must take.

Humanity without religion is an unfortunate if not an impossible thing. But religion without

humanity is infinitely worse than humanity without religion. If such a contrast were possible, to love God and not to love mankind would be supremely worse than to love man and forget the abstract, theoretic God.

The heart of religion is the love of God. The heart of Christianity is the love of God in Christ and the love of Christ. The Infinite identified Himself with Jesus, and to love Jesus is to love the God whom He ineffably reveals. In like manner, Jesus ever identified Himself with humanity. Thus to love humanity is to love Jesus Christ. The love of the disciple for the Master is measured by the love of the disciple for his brethren. To love humanity and to love Christ are one and inseparable now and forever. This is Jesus' lesson to Peter.

Worship and appreciation would not suffice. On the memorable occasion of Cæsarea Philippi, Peter had been the first to declare in terms of emphasis and absoluteness, "Thou art the Christ," but it was not enough to satisfy the demand of Jesus.

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" "Yea, Lord, have I not left all and followed Thee?" "Simon, it is not enough. Feed My lambs." He saith again the second time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" "Yea, Lord, did I not say at the Last Supper that I will lay down my life for Thy sake?" Jesus saith again,

"Feed My sheep." Again, the third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" "Yea, Lord, was I not the first of Thy disciples to declare the divineness of Thy being?" "It is not enough. Simon, feed My sheep. Simon, you love Me when you love men."

Council after council of the Church has re-echoed the words of Peter at Cæsarea Philippi, "Thou art the Christ." Creed upon creed, confession upon confession have been composed to give the most exalted estimate of Christ. It is a fine thing, this intellectual estimate of the person of Jesus. That person gives the human mind an exhaustless theme for contemplation. But these things do not answer the imperative demand. Nicodemus said, "Thou art from God," but he did not join the Twelve.

The love of truth is fine, and beautiful the appreciation of the glorious words which fell from Jesus' lips. But it does not satisfy the claim of Jesus on our human love.

The Christian Church has represented Jesus as having a wonderful power over nature, and has stood in awe before the miraculous, but to adore in wonder does not answer the test of love.

Again, the mystic mind may draw itself away within the shades of contemplation to commune with Christ, and lose itself in spiritual ecstasy. It is not enough. Men may well go to Keswick,

but they must not remain there. They may well follow Jesus up the mountainside, but they must also follow Him when He goes down upon the plain of human life to heal men of their diseases.

Thus the human soul may prostrate itself in every form of human worship and yet not give satisfaction to the test of Christ, and it may be little more than bowing to an image. All these manifestations, as such, were constantly repelled by Jesus. He called those who were seeking signs an evil and adulterous generation. He said He would have mercy and not sacrifice. Still He asks, "Lovest thou Me?" So men may enshrine Christ in terms exalting Him to the throne of the universe, may admire His transcendent truth, may stand in awe before His majestic, ineffable presence, and yet never know, in reality, a love for Christ.

The truth is larger than this. They may even do some of these things imperfectly and yet meet His all-important demand. I was called to attend a funeral service a little while ago. The man was not called or considered a Christian man. He had been filled with intellectual doubts and could only see in Christ the nature of a human being. Somehow he had not been able to fit himself into the life of the Church. He did not believe that such a thing as a miracle had ever happened. I know what men thought as I mounted the pulpit before a great throng of his

townsmen. They said, "What can the minister say?"

But I had seen more of him than they. He had opened his heart to me one day as we quietly glided along over the canals of Venice. I had seen the tears stream down his face at the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau. I had seen his heart as those church deacons had not seen it. The man had a heart like the very heart of Christ. He was full of self-sacrifice. He loved men. He had wrought for men, comforted and uplifted, fed and clothed them all his life. He was a physician. God bless them and make them followers of the Great Physician. I love them as I behold them bending with anxious solicitude over their fellow men.

What then had I to do, as I stood before the form of this agnostic? My task was simple; I simply brought him face to face with the final judgment: "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." This man had been a follower of Christ, had loved Him all his life—in other men.

Yes, humanity without religion would be infinitely better than religion without humanity. The real ground of love is goodness. We could not love such a quality as omnipotence. The real reason we love Christ is for all that His cross

represents to us. He reveals God's pity and care for men. He reveals God's suffering for His children. We love Him because He so loved men that He could say of those who put Him to a cruel death, "Father, forgive them." We love Him because He was His own good Samaritan. We love Him for forgiving that sinful woman whom religious men were ready to stone. We love the Master because He first loved us and men.

If this be a true and real affection, it will make us like Him. For we become like what we love. If we thus love Christ because He was forgiving we shall be forgiving. If we love Him because He so loved men, we shall love them and give ourselves for them.

Let us be honest with ourselves. You and I know men and women who deny our creeds (I am sorry that they do), who cannot worship with us (I wish they could), who do not believe a single miracle, who do not reverence our Bible, and cannot repeat our confessions or use our terms. Yet, construed by the great demand of Jesus, they are followers of Him and love Him.

I wish I could make such men and women, many of whom are noble souls, lose sight of our faltering preachers, our fallible churches, forget our theoretical terms which only confuse them, and behold the Christ whom they really follow in our Jesus of Nazareth. And again, I wish

that I could make some very religious men and women see that, because they are unloving, they are far away from the Christ whom they acclaim.

The real love of Christ is the love of truth in one who was true, the love of purity in one whose heart saw the vision of God because it was so pure, the love of compassion in a tender heart which beat for every human woe, the love of goodness in one supremely good, of love in one supremely loving. To love thus is to love Christ.

He asks of us, "Lovest thou Me?" We might answer, "Lord, do we not worship Thee? Do we not praise Thee in hymns? Do we not confess Thee before men?" His answer would be, "If ye love Me keep My commandment." What is His commandment? "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you."

Yes, Christ is here, but not in our hymns, not in this Bible, not in these confessions. He is here in the man beside you. He is there in those outside our doors who are His sheep and have no shepherd. Christ will be with you tomorrow. Where? In your clerk in the office, in the boy who calls to bring you your daily food, in the servant in your home, in your associates in business, in the man who runs the motor or collects your fare upon the street-car. Let the peals of the organ cease, let the voice of our coronation be still, let the preacher's voice

be hushed and let him sit silently with you while the voice of Christ reaches our very heart. "Lovest thou Me?" "Do you love one another?" "Do the wrongs of men pain your heart?" "Do their sorrows touch you deeply?" "Do you love your neighbour as yourself?" "Have you a tender affection for men in their sins?"

What is our religion? It is not a set of doctrines. It is a great overwhelming feeling. It is a profound emotion of love leading us to a great surrender and willing sacrifice. Do not lose your emotional nature. You had a great emotion once. You expressed it to her who sits beside you. You were moved throughout your whole being. Let your feeling for Christ and for mankind be like that. It would do great strong men good if they should break down sometimes as my great strong friend did at the Passion Play. It would do them good if oftener they wept the tears of children. Religion at its best is a great affection. Its supreme object is mankind, in Christ.

The great white throne is set. The judge is there. The lines are drawn. They divide. How do they divide? By creeds and confessions, by faiths and unfaiths, by triunities and trinities?

"When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and

He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blest of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee: or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in: or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

"Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hun-

gered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

Listen again, "Whosoever causeth one of these little ones to stumble, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the depths of the sea."

Two thousand years ago Jesus stood in the midst of those who did Him homage and wept His bitterest tears. To-day, over every human heart that steels itself in icy coldness, that does not respond with a great human love for mankind, the Saviour weeps and the Saviour's heart is pierced.

What is to-day the supreme need of the Christian Church? Some say an old theology. Others say a new one. And I suppose it needs both. But men by it need to say, with arms outstretched to all men, Ye are ours, and we are yours, because we both are Christ's. The supreme need is a great vibrating, pulsating passion for mankind, both soul and body. Jesus says to His Church to-day as He said to Peter, "Lovest thou Me?" "Feed My sheep."

XIII

THE UPWARD LOOK AND THE DOWNWARD REACH

IN the world of science we hear much about the law known as "the survival of the fittest." We have been discovering the wide operation of this law. Meanwhile, however, in the moral life of the race, especially in our great modern social movements, we have rediscovered another law, which was put into language twenty centuries ago by one who had caught the spirit of his Lord.

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves, for even Christ pleased not Himself."

As I stood one day looking at the original of Hofmann's famous picture of the Master and the Sinful Woman, two things impressed me in the study of it. One was the countenance of Jesus which, while it was turned with the look of severity, mingled with patience, towards the Scribes and Pharisees, also seemed peculiarly, at the same time, to be looking upward. The other was the attitude of the right hand of Jesus which was stretched down towards the sinful woman on her knees. The upward look and the downward reach.

One of the great beauties of nature is her mingling of things unlike each other, each serving the other's needs. The natural order is not like a scientific show-case or like a library of well-ordered books. This universal order, since the stars sang their morning song together, has been the blending of a multitude of things which, in our human knowledge of them, we have set apart.

Nature consists thus of unity in diversity. Her divided and subdivided kingdoms exist only in the thought of man. She is not like our human life, marked off into its political states with their boundaries and barriers. Her various systems pervade and penetrate each other. They live upon and by one another.

In our human order also, when we live its freest and most natural life, we do not gather ourselves together so much upon the basis of similarity as that of unlikeness. The family is the highest type of our mutual human life and it is a bringing together of the unlike and opposite. The gentle woman and the strong man, the little child and the great father, the brother and the sister. There are striking likenesses of feature and of temperament, but these are no more marked than the elements of unlikeness.

When, however, we pass out from this natural social order of God into the realm of our artificial human associations, we find that this divine law is everywhere perverted and repressed. In God's

order it is the unity of unlikeness. Man's disposition is to bring things together by similarities. The one completes the defect by some compensation and gives a real and final unity. The other takes one small portion, multiplies it by itself and issues in a system of inharmonious exaggerations, so that to him that hath much more is given and from him that hath not is taken away even that which he hath.

Thus it has been the tendency of our human blindness and error to unite the like and to separate the unlike. We have largely ordered the world not in complementary groups, but by a cold analysis into classes, so that each man, instead of living in the world, lives within his own little class. Here he finds his own ways of doing things repeated, his particular tastes are met, the limited judgments of his little mind are conformed to, and his words stand for wisdom among those who speak like him.

Thus our human society has been largely formed after the classification of a schoolhouse rather than like the organism of a family. Test this by the population of the city in which we live, by its rigid segregation of race and station. Witness it in our commercial life, with the barons of industry about the hotel table, while the sons of toil meet in their dingy hall. Apply it to the professions, to the calling of the ministry, and note how we classify men, and to our churches in

which we often say, "Our church does not have *that* class of people."

It is true that this principle is not altogether bad. It would not be bad at all, if it were not carried too far. Our deep mutual sympathies uplift us in common and invigorate the will and purpose. The trouble is that, in proceeding along the lines of these classifications, we have depreciated the finer graces of human life and have impaired its affections, so that everywhere upon the face of its sympathy is written the commercial title "limited."

In it there is more of self-will than of pity, more of the law of the survival of the fittest than of Jesus' larger law by which the strong are to sustain the weak. We are the schoolroom with its childish method, which never should have been its method, of the boy at the head of the class and the other at the foot, when perhaps the first ought to have been last and the last first. Our human order is too much like this and too little like the home.

Our tendency has gone all too far to find our equals and to associate with them; the weak with the weak, the strong with the strong, rich with rich, poor with poor, the cultured with the cultured, the uncultured with the uncultured, the wise together with the wise and the ignorant with the ignorant.

We not only do this, but with a still lower aim

and motive, we like to talk with those who think as we do and who applaud our knowledge. We read the books that meet our tastes or justify our opinions and confirm our ideas and conceptions. We go to hear the preachers who echo our own notions and the tenor of whose words is to confirm us in our self-satisfaction.

We resent those who stand over in contrast to us and again and again we assume the contemptuous attitude of the Scribes, "These people that know not the law which I know are accursed."

Thus we fall into a dwarfing egoism. We become in our self-satisfaction very near to the classic man who talked to himself, as he said, first because he liked to talk to a sensible man, and second because he liked to hear a sensible man talk. Our little narrow world reflects our little narrow self, or at best the class in which we have been disposed.

We have thus destroyed the family idea of nature and have substituted for it a well-ordered set of classes with the poor dullards to keep misery company, while the brilliant shine in their mutually reflected splendour and become, unknown to themselves, a society for mutual admiration. The result is that life has fallen largely into the order of the survival of the fittest; to him that hath is given, from him that hath not is taken away; the weak become weaker and the strong stronger.

The great commotion in the social order of our day and generation is the effort to change this current into the splendid order of democracy.

Nothing opposes this classification but religion. Knowledge does not do it, because we classify ourselves upon the basis of its attainment. Morals do not do this work, because, as in our churches, we have sought to classify ourselves upon this basis. We permit our personal integrity to dwarf and limit our human sympathy and even a falsely so-called religion has been thus misused.

The one serene force that makes for the new order is the faith of Jesus, which has been put in this striking language by His apostle, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." In these words we have what we might call the law of the attraction of the dissimilar. The two Greek words used might be translated "mighty" and "decrepit." The purpose of Jesus was to change the order of civilization into the similitude of the family. This was the meaning of the new word which He gave for God, the word Father.

This, however, has not been the way in which discipleship to Him, as revealed in the Church, has been carried out. His Church has followed too far the law of the survival of the fittest. He maintained that the experience of discipleship with Him should mean the vanishing of the

burning glow of self-reliance into the softer light of trust. He opens before us two worlds, the world above us with its light shining upon the world beneath us. We are, as it were, suspended between them with a higher existence to attain and the lower existence to assist.

In Jesus, aspiration and sympathy meet together. These are the two attitudes of Christian discipleship, the attitudes of Jesus in Hofmann's famous picture, the upward look and the downward reach. We should have both. We must understand that we are to be strong in admiration of the lofty as well as in pity for the lowly. Some great German philosopher is said to have defined religion as reverence for inferior beings. It is certainly one of the results of true religion.

Each attitude must be maintained and neither yielded to the other. The duty of Christians is both to visit the fatherless and widows and to keep themselves unspotted from the world. They must keep strong themselves, in order that they may become the strength of the weak.

It is too bad to see culture without service and it is just as sad to witness service without culture. Indeed we have to-day, in our great social movements, too many men who have the downward reach without the upward look, and they are thus blind leaders of the blind.

To evade and despise the knowledge which is greater than our own, the vision that is larger,

the aim that is higher, may be as bad as to lose sympathy and tenderness. To stifle aspiration is as harmful as to repress compassion and to dwarf our faith as to lose our sympathetic touch. We cannot feed the fires of human life from its own fuel.

The downward reach may mean the depression of hope, without the upward look. Sympathy with human needs is vain without communion with divine grace. He who would bring the light of the world to the darkness of man must possess the riches of God as well as witness the poverty of the race. There can be no nether springs of service without the upper springs of inspiration. None of us can uplift even himself, how much less can he uplift others. Thus every one of us stands between the appeal of the things above him and of those beneath him, between the human reality and the divine ideal, between the discipline of duty and the peace of faith.

The great Gentile apostle declared that every man in Christ was a "new creature." Most of us have gone only a little way. We are still followers of temperament; the slaves of taste and tendency, the victims of environment. If we have tried to do the one duty, we have left the other undone, have sought to gain the upward look but have failed to witness the infinite vision, because our horizon is bounded by our own narrow sympathies and our grudging self-denial.

Such men were the Pharisees of Jesus' day. They could not see His face because its light radiated over the expanse of too large a human world. Then on the other hand there was the opposite class, the Zealots, the Essenes, busy with their plans for the salvation of the chosen people, so lost in them, that they did not witness the kingdom though it stood in their very midst.

It is sad to see men and women in religion trying to save themselves and forgetting all the rest of the world except perhaps their own charmed and chosen circle. It is just as sad to find men trying to save the world without any vision beyond their own horizon and with no strength stronger than their own.

Let us look again at the picture of the Master. His picture is always thus, with the upward look and the downward reach. Sometimes He communes with the best beloved disciple, the saintly John, at other times with the multitude. He passes from the presence of God in Gethsemane to the companionship of Judas. He is always blending knowledge and love, aspiration and sympathy, truth and love, strength and duty, righteousness and pity, virtue and charity, culture and service. The very last moments on the Cross bear witness to it. "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." There was the upward look. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." There was the downward reach.

"And not to please ourselves." Ah, but that is what we do. We intend to please ourselves. God's law for us is that of an affectionate, sympathetic conformity to our human environment. We constantly transgress it and try to conform our human environment to meet our tastes, to suit our tempers, to minister to our own distorted selfish desires. God meant that our environment should embrace humanity. We have narrowed it down to our own little group.

"Even Christ pleased not Himself." "We then that are strong should bear the infirmities of them that are weak." "They that are strong"; there is the upward look. "The infirmities of the weak"; there is the downward reach.

The best of us, in our attitude towards human life, are very far from this picture of the Master. Our vision of the spirit is so dim, our arm of flesh so short that we need to pray with Francis Ridley Havergal:

"Lord, speak to me that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone.

"O lead me, Lord, that I may lead
The wandering and the wavering feet,
O feed me, Lord, that I may feed
The hungering ones with manna sweet.

"O strengthen me, that while I stand,
Firm on the Rock and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea."

One of the great pictures of the world is that of the Transfiguration by Raphael, in the Vatican at Rome. I always love to look at it and yet I always wish that I might place another beside it which I would entitle, "The Next Hour of the Day." The picture which I would place there in the Vatican beside Raphael's Transfiguration would be that of the Master who has just come down from the mountain upon the plain of human life, touching the poor human lunatic and healing him of his disease. Most of us have seen only the one picture of Jesus in that story of the Transfiguration. We have seen in it the upward look. In the other picture, we should have, side by side with it, the downward reach.

XIV

THE CULTURE OF THE HOME

WHETHER or not this be the right message, there is need for some message to our American people regarding the home.

I shall try to treat the subject in an ideal way, although, holding as we do these treasures in earthen vessels, we all fall short of our ideals. So much the more reason why, fall though we may, we should ever be looking up to them as our guiding stars.

The home is the great background of life. When the sight of life's background is lost, its foreground has no meaning and intent. All life is miserable drudgery unless we witness its divine eternal meaning. We rise only by looking upward. We know only by looking inward. Life is in its intent, its motive, its spirit, not in the thing we are doing at the moment, but in the guiding star in the East of some ideal we are pursuing. There is no realm of human life which needs to-day to have cast upon it the sunlight of a lofty idealism more than the family and the home.

The dearest of conceptions and the finest

thoughts of life are associated and are blended with the word and the idea of "home." Its origin and sanction are divine, not only as ordained by the authority of Scripture, but because taken at its highest and its best it is filled with sacred meaning and is its own revelation. It is the symbol of the highest and the holiest in human life.

The mind and heart of man, in reaching out for God, in their effort to give the finest and the ultimate expression to our conception of the infinite, have taken the synonym of Jesus, the word "Father." In our ideal for the human race, the brotherhood of all mankind, we have united on the home as the highest and the final expression of our humanity.

When the Eternal Father, in the fullness of His goodness and His glory, was to make Himself known fully among men, He did it in a very sweet and simple way. He found first a good and pure and holy woman. The Incarnation was the supreme investiture of human life with its divine light, and it began in the earliest moments of the prophetic home of Nazareth and sanctified maternity with all its holy meaning. The first mark of the Incarnation was the divineness of human motherhood.

Later on, in the dark Middle Ages, when theologic thought presented to the mind and heart of man a God who was a monarch and was

not a father, in natural simplicity, the human hearts of men sought a divine and holy object which they could love, as well as fear and worship, and so they put upon the throne of their affection the Holy Mother.

When Jesus wanted to reveal in living parable the meaning of the kingdom of heaven and of God He stretched forth His hands upon a home, and took a little child from it and set him in the midst of them.

So, also, we have tried to think the better name for what we commonly call heaven, and we go to the same vocabulary of the heart and say, "Man goeth to his long home." The great apostle, in one of his noblest utterances of faith, speaks of eternity after the analogy and symbol of the home as the "house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

When the Christian Church sought to make its distinction between the secular and sacred, and to determine the essential sacraments, it embraced marriage in them; and it is one of the saddest retrogressions of religion that we have removed it from its holy place.

Thus, in our human effort to reach up through the human to the divine, we have taken as the highest point of meeting the human home. It is not possible to discern the line between heaven and earth. As we look out over the horizon and ask ourselves where the sky begins we find

that it begins at the very earth. The one comes down and touches the other. The divinity of Christ is the sovereign revelation of the humanity of God.

Witness how naturally we have turned to it in our effort to reveal and to express the true, the beautiful, the good. The art of the ages has largely spent itself upon the Holy Mother and the Holy Child. As we pass through the galleries of the Old World, we linger the longest before Murillo and Raphael and a multitude of others, who, in their effort to picture the divine in the human, have given us these symbols of the abiding-place of time.

While the poet has inspired us with truth, with patriotism, with righteousness, his sonnets have been mainly of that human love which prophesies the family and home.

Not long ago there came to me a book from its author, and before I opened its pages I read its title, "The Dearest Spot on Earth." How immediately and instinctively I knew that it was a book about the home!

Is it not because within its sacred walls we find our highest and our largest opportunity for self-expression? Do we not there best interpret the teaching of the Master, that we gain by losing, that he is highest who serveth most? It is there that we find the finest chance for sympathy, for self-denial, for self-sacrifice. The finest expres-

sion of religion is the religion of the fireside. It may seem strange to say it, but, as a religious institution, the Church ought to be secondary to the home and never a religious substitute for it.

During the earlier years of every little human life, the father and the mother are God to the child. "I do not need to say my prayers to-night," said a little girl, "because father is here with me." I remember once asking a little child in one of my classes, "Ought we to love God more than father and mother?" "Yes," he said, "we ought to, but we cannot." Thus out of the mouths of babes and sucklings God has ordained strength. Again and again the little child may lead us.

The order of religion is always this, first the natural, then the spiritual. It was a sad and a false teaching when men were taught that the sacred and divine must be gained by the suppression of the natural and human. We can only pass up into the realm of the divine through that which is divinely human.

Ours is a sad lot if we have allowed the home to become incidental in our life, if there we do not find the unfailing shelter, the great stronghold, the very source and impulse of all our living. The saddest thing in this world is a broken, ruined home where love has been turned into hatred, patience into petulance, self-sacrifice into selfishness.

There are a multitude of men and women who have allowed themselves to grow away from the home, to whom it has lost its meaning in the stress of common daily life. The performance of its duties has crowded out its sweetness and its light, and while human life has gained in its intensity and movement, it has lost in depth and grace.

Many men and women of our day have lost this deeper sense of need, and as life's obligations have increased, as its circle has widened, their need of holy preparation for those needs is forgotten, and they substitute the vague circumference of life for its sacred altar at the centre.

Oftentimes the human duties are performed but the human graces are not gained and cultured. Such lives know not those quiet hours and places in which the symmetry of life is gained, so that its length and height and breadth and depth are equal.

Such men and women have no hours for the inner motives of the heart. They have no silent times; no hours of withdrawal from the life of business or of toil; no still small voices to strengthen and to calm. The things of the material life, its losses and its gains, never recede into their proper background. They learn not to rejoice in the more costly treasures of the mind and heart. They do not approach life

from within. It has no guiding impulse. Yea, even in the home itself, its own cares and duties are often permitted to crowd out its graces and its beauties. This is a sad mistake.

Such men and women fulfill the sad prophecy of Wordsworth's ode: The heaven that lay about them in their infancy is lost. The shades of prison house have closed. The deepest and the sweetest things of life are left to die away and fade into the light of common day. The first affections, the fountain light of all our day, the master light of all our seeing, no longer uphold us, cherish or have power to make our noisy years seem moments in the being of the eternal silence.

Witness the meaning of the home. From its earliest prophetic beginnings, the marriage is begun in faith, in confidence, in unselfishness, in devotion. The vocabulary of human beauty is exhausted in its holy service with its words, love, comfort, honour, serve, keep in sickness and in health, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer. Into it is gathered up the myrrh and frankincense of life and laid upon the altar of God.

And I think most men and women mean it all, intend it, feel it, but by and by the strain of life comes, the great tests of unselfishness. How easy then it is to let sad changes steal over us. Those beautiful attentions which make all the world love a lover are crowded out and one by

one are lost. The attitudes of deference, of care, of constancy, like the frailest and most beautiful of flowers, are so easily destroyed by the cold winds of time. The old allurements, the thoughtfulness of other days, become but shadowy recollections of all those first affections.

Never cease to be lovers. Let the old names never be blotted out of the book of life. The old language should be abiding and eternal. The vocabulary of love should never sink into the commonplace of every-day speech.

It is said in pleasantry, when it ought to be said in sadness, that "the happiest life that ever was led is always to court and never to wed." It is also a sad truth that "the lover in the husband may be lost."

Keep in sacred beauty all the anniversary days. Stop on the way home to carry a few flowers; perhaps more inexpensive than of old, but yet with a deeper fragrance and a meaning all their own. Be lovers again as the day comes that marks the first confession. Have a wedding day every year, if it be only for one evening hour.

One of the great needs of the home to-day is that "the other days" should be always in remembrance by conserving the habit of being sufficient to ourselves. There should always be many times when the third person is a crowd and only two are company. If love was blind, let love never again regain the sight of censure.

"Be this of coming days the pride,
The wife is greatly dearer than the bride."

This life of the home ought to be a growing order in its meaning and its beauty. As wifehood is more beautiful than the earlier relations of prophecy and hope, so motherhood is still more beautiful than wifehood.

I delight to look at the Madonnas of Murillo with their celestial colour. I also love to think that every mother may be a holy mother if she will. This life of ours together ought to be one great, abiding and unceasing transfiguration from holy into holier.

And then, in most true homes, comes childhood with all its hopes and prophecies. How sadly often, however, instead of bringing joy, of deepening patience, of enlarging self-sacrifice and self-denial, it only spoils the home. God meant that children should be the great developers of care and love. We often think and speak about the training of our children but do we not forget that, if we let them, they are training us in the finest graces of the human life, are drawing out, if we will let them, both our sweetest and our strongest elements of character. That it is not so is generally because the father and the mother have not learned to live together first as husband and wife. They have divided their functions and their cares instead of holding them in mutual unity.

As there is nothing more beautiful than the union of beauty and strength, of greatness with simplicity, of power with tenderness, so there is nothing better for the father than to participate in the affections of the mother for the little child.

It is inspiring to see great, stern, bold Oliver Cromwell on the battle-field of Worcester, but it is finer still perhaps to see that great, strong man forsaking the affairs of state to sit for days by the bedside of his little child. I like to think of Martin Luther as he writes his splendid "Ein feste Burg," but I am also glad that such a man could bring together strength and beauty, profoundness and simplicity, so that he could also write, "Away in the manger, no crib for His bed."

So, to strong men, who are husbands and fathers, I would say, Never let the time come when your hearts may not be touched with the finger of a little child, when the great feelings and emotions of human love and passion may not have their way.

One of the saddest things of human life is the way in which

> "Years following years steal something every day;
> Until at last they steal us from ourselves away."

Then there is the home itself. The true culture of life is really that which binds us most closely

to its most common things. Any culture that wends its pathway away from the home is false. The sovereign need of the world is men and women who both profoundly think and intensely feel, who, while they let knowledge grow from more to more, also let more of reverence in them dwell, that heart and mind according well may make one music as before, but vaster. A true culture is that which touches every point of human life with the tendrils of human sympathy.

The home ought to be, for rich or poor, for great or small, as my friend the author calls it in his book, "the dearest spot on earth." Beware then when the club begins to take its place or when the ambitions of the world make the home seem a tame and useless place, when you are restless within its walls. Do not let the work of the profession, the duties of public service, or even the duties of the church, take the place of the home.

In order that this should be so, it should be kept attractive. To make it beautiful it should have the most that the purse can afford. It should be a means of culture. How often I long to tear the diamonds from the fingers of women that I might sell them and invest their material worth in the beautifying of their bare and careless homes! I have sometimes wished for a new profession, the art of the decoration of the home, so that there might be some one to go about and

teach men and women how to make their homes the places of culture; to teach them the difference between good and worthless books, the difference between a costly chromo and an inexpensive work of art. The very poorest and simplest of homes might be made to breathe a culture of their own.

And yet, of course, after all, the true culture of the home is that of its spirit. The best way of keeping the father, the wife, the boys and the girls from evil is to make the home attractive and sufficient to itself. A man's home ought to be enough for him so that if everything else in the world were taken away he might console himself with its abiding treasures.

To do all this it must be a religious home. Its religion must be natural and simple, not hard, but joyous. I think it would be helpful towards having the spirit of the church in the home if we thought more about having the home in the church. As I look out over the congregation, my greatest joy is to see the home in the church, the family pew with all the family there.

How I wish the husbands, who in days gone by shadowed the one they loved, were always by her side, would be lovers still, and not let the wife pursue her lonesome way by day and night to the house of God! A husband and father came to me the other day and it was encouraging and hopeful to have a man come with so unusual

a trouble. It was because the wife and mother was unwilling to bring the home into the church.

It is far easier to keep the true religious spirit in the home if in some simple way the fireside be made an altar and the father and mother God's priests. I am glad that my little boy regards it as a punishment if he must be sent to his room for some wrong-doing and kept there during the morning hymn and prayer. I am not speaking now of a severe religious observance in the nature of a penance. Each parent must find his own way of doing it, but it may be done. Perhaps it need only be the singing of a hymn and the repeating together of the Lord's Prayer. It may be the gathering of the family together for the reading of a Psalm, not a long and imprecatory one, but perhaps the Twenty-third, or, indeed, the reading of a poem. When there are little children perhaps it is best to sing some children's song that they like. Religion in the home may be made attractive if we will only try to find the way.

One thing more I want to speak of. There are many burdens to be borne in the home. It calls for much of patience, of fortitude, of courage. It brings toil and care and pain. These things may be used in either of two ways. They may be the developers of sweetness and of light, or they may make the home a place from which to flee, and not a place of help.

In the first place, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, you need to learn to bear one another's burdens. But you also need to remember the other injunction of the apostle, that every man must bear his own burden. Keep some things to yourself. There are some burdens of the wife which the husband ought not to know. On the other hand, let not the husband, at the close of day, pour out his difficulties of the day upon the tired wife. At least be sure to choose the right and proper time. Let not your added burden be the last straw. Never break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax. Then, too, remember the third message, that of the psalmist, that there are other burdens which together we must cast upon God.

Above all things, no matter what comes, no matter how tired, no matter how many distractions, keep the home cheerful.

So you see that this home life may tend in either way. How sadly we see it when, as the years pass, the husband and the wife grow away from each other and all the beauty of their life is gone, even though they may still perform its duties and keep its outward obligations! But it may grow the other way, the wife more beautiful than the bride, the mother more an object of affection and of worship than either, the husband with more reverence and care than the lover, the father even more tender than the husband, and

the home with the little children happier than all. This is the way it ought to be. If it is not so, begin over again. Go back and find the place where the paths divided and bring them together again.

You remember that in the days of the Middle Ages, when men might be hunted for their lives, if they could only gain the portals of some church or temple, when once across its threshold, they were safe from harm. Not even the monarch of that despotic day could touch them. That ought to be our feeling towards our home; it ought to be a place from which we can shut out everything that harms us or disturbs us.

I am not pleading for a narrow selfishness. We must remember other homes and other men and women. We ought to think also of the homeless, many of whom are doing such splendid service in the world. We must give ourselves to the service of the world. We ought sometimes to forsake the comfort of our own firesides to serve in the great kingdom of heaven, of social life, of public life, of business, and of culture, but some men whom I know seem to be good and helpful and of service everywhere except in their own homes. I have seen those who were angels without and devils within. They seemed to reserve all their meanness to be visited upon the wife or the children. They could be patient and strong among men but wretchedly weak and false to their own.

I am suggesting a well-balanced life, a life that is strong in the great world of action because it has behind it a great centre of impulse. Let the circumference of life's activity and service be as broad as it may but keep ever returning to its centre of unfailing sources. Go out upon the battle-field, but do not forget to have some fortress to which you may retire for comfort, strength, and rest, for the larger conflict of to-morrow.

This message is needed to-day. The home as a sacred place has been lost. The old traditions have gone. Many of us never saw, to know it, the spot where we were born. We do not live out our days, as did our fathers, within some sacred enclosure. We move about from place to place and year to year. So much the more need of learning to keep the true spirit of the home.

This true spirit can only be kept by an unceasing return to early days. There is something really beautiful about the childishness of age. The old man or woman forgets the things of yesterday but remembers the incidents of childhood. This ought to be typical of life. It should have its great returning tides ever sweeping backward and gathering up the dearest things of all the past, but then sweeping onward to the better and the larger future.

And so, husbands and wives, fathers and

mothers, if necessary, begin it all over again. Your life perhaps has become hard and stern. Begin again and let patience wait on toil and care. Let reverence be the handmaid of the passing years. Get back to other days. Say it over again to yourself: "For better for worse," "For better for worse." Let them creep over you again, the old impulses, the old ways, the thoughts, the feelings, all the touches of happiness and love. Learn to smooth out the wrinkles of time. Mingle again the poetry with the prose of life.

Let the minister join your hands again together, and what God hath joined together let not man, let not yourselves, put asunder. Realize the prophecy of the book's title and make your home "the dearest spot on earth."

XV

THE UNKNOWN VISITATION

A THOUGHTFUL consideration of the character of Jesus reveals a most striking and significant reconciling of apparent contradictions. It is the way of men to rejoice in the day of their recognition and honour and homage; to despair in the hour of disestablishment and dishonour; to be calm, peaceful and joyous in the presence of the most momentary success; to become disheartened and distressed by an apparent defeat.

With Jesus the process seems ever to be reversed. A betrayed captive in the garden of Gethsemane, He is led away by His captors in majestic silence; a prisoner before the high priest, He hears the false charges of perjured witnesses without a word of protest; in the presence of Pilate He opens not His lips and He has no remonstrance for a miserable, mocking Herod. Throughout those last days, from Gethsemane to Golgotha, He seems altogether undisturbed. His only utterances upon these occasions are of a sublime confidence and hope. "Thou shalt behold the Son of Man coming in power and glory, upon the clouds of heaven."

The final human defeat inspires a profound faith and a sublime courage.

How strangely does the reverse appear in the event of The Triumphant Entry. He is entering the Holy City, hailed as a King, surrounded by an acclaiming multitude, amid the waving of palms and with the shouts of triumph in His ears. He halts the great procession upon the city's heights, stills the voices of the throng, and in words of deepest bitterness, intermingled with His tears, utters the despairing cry of a rejected prophet, "If thou hadst known the day of thy peace, but it is hidden from thine eyes. The days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee and compass thee around and keep thee in on every side and shall dash thee to the ground and thy children within thee and they shall not leave thee one stone upon another."

It is the lament of a prophet over the nation and the age that has blindly rejected a prophet and a prophet's truth. Its day of visitation had come and gone and it had known it not.

Beneath lay the great city engrossed in its little narrow life, busy with its miserable babblings, its Scribes and Pharisees religiously washing their cups and platters, straightening out their phylacteries, mumbling their prayers, counting their fastings, repeating their laws and creeds, memorizing the traditions of their forefathers, all

with their faces set rigidly towards a dead and dying past, propping up an outworn temple, patching garments that are rent with age, and guarding with watchful eye an outgrown ritual. There are the merchants busily hastening back and forth, between the inner court where they may say their prayers and the outer where they are turning the sacrifice of God into an unholy gain. Pilate sits in his judgment hall thinking how he may retain a wretched Cæsar's friendship; Herod revels in his unhallowed pleasures. And saddest of all, the great throng of the people, in utter blindness, permit priest and Pharisee to rob them, and choose as their teachers the falsest of Scribes. While, just above them, their greatest prophet, their true high priest, their sovereign King stands weeping over their rejection and they behold Him not.

We have here but an instance of the ceaseless repetitions of history. The world has again and again rejected its prophets. Age after age had this nation refused to listen to the voices of the men of God. It had left an Elijah to be fed by ravens and poor widows. How like unto that of Jesus was his last lament, "The children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life to take it away." An Isaiah follows in a succeeding age. He utters truths that to

the ages are immortal, but to the age that heard them unknown; to a people whose heart was gross, whose ears were heavy and whose eyes were shut.

A Jeremiah appears, and to another generation he proposes the displacement of one type of worship by the substitution of a loftier. His reward is a prison cell. His priceless record is cut in pieces, thrown into the fire upon the hearth and consumed, by a people that angrily demands, "Wherefore dost Thou prophesy these undesirable things?" Ezekiel stirs the dry bones of a later Israel, rebukes and upsets the teachings of her ignorant leaders, false instructors and lying prophets. He too is rejected by his generation for the proclaimers of falsehood and the prophets of a dead past. The history of Israel's succeeding years is too sadly epitomized in the lament of its fulfilling prophet, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee."

Finally the Prophet of prophets has appeared. From the very beginning Israel has had no place for Him. He is born in a stable, because there was no room for Him in the inn. He has never known a home. "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head." He begins the utterance of His immortal truth at His home in Nazareth. He is indignantly rejected, a prophet

dishonoured by His fellows. He is cast forth out of the city, "led to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built that they might throw Him down headlong." He goes thence to the country of the Gadarenes. The city came out to meet Him "and when they saw Him they besought Him that He would depart out of their borders." He goes back to His own again, only to meet a half-doubting mother and a household of unbelieving brethren. He casts out demons and does many mighty works. If so it must be that He is in league with devils. His forerunner doubts Him, sends an embassy from His prison cell to ask, "Art Thou He that should come or look we for another?" He stands in their presence and walks in their midst, a standing moral miracle. They shut their eyes to His transcendent life and ask for a petty, trivial "sign." He is misunderstood always by all, except a little handful of the humblest followers, and even of them, again and again, He has to ask, "Are ye also without understanding?" They fall asleep during the agony of Gethsemane. They flee in the face of danger. One moment He is teaching the beauty of humility and the next they are quarrelling over which of them is greatest.

Sometimes, rejected by the Church, He turns to the world. But His connection with the Church is against Him. Because His face is towards Jerusalem the Samaritan village will not

receive Him. He must go another way. He turns again, on the road, to His disciples for comfort. They shake their heads and tell Him that His sayings are "hard sayings." Some of them turn back and walk no more with Him.

The great world does not even know that He exists. The Cæsar at Rome has never heard of this King of men. No annalist records His name and He would have been unknown to the ages He has transformed but for a few publicans and fishermen who turned historians. A learned man is writing of the Church. To him Jesus is either an unknown or an unworthy name. Herod prefers the company of a Herodias; Pilate chooses Cæsar's friendship; Judas takes thirty pieces of silver; the Church of God and the people select Barabbas, in place of Jesus Christ. And the Son of God goes on to Calvary, leaving the most immortal truths that ever fell upon the ears of men in the sole possession of a few Marys, Johns and Nicodemuses.

But history does not cease its sad repeatings here. The apostles proclaim the truths bequeathed to them. They are called to drink His cup and share His baptism. The Galatian Church repudiates its Paul. The brethren forsake him. The deacons and the elders have serious doubts as to whether he ought to be permitted to preach to the churches or not. He is left to end his days in a prison cell and passes

on to death alone. Each age goes on and relentlessly repeats the doings of its predecessor.

In the name of religion Galileo must recant the truth, and because the church so dictates, shout in the presence of the congregation that the earth is flat and that around it moves the sun. Savonarola, in the name of God, by the vicar of God, is stretched upon the gallows, his body burned at the stake and his ashes cast upon the Arno. Giordano Bruno declares for the Copernican theory of the universe and lights the piazza at Rome with his burning body. The golden-tongued Chrysostom is subjected to every kind of indignity, and banished. One after the other Huss, Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley walk to the stake. John Knox goes into exile, John Bunyan lies in Bedford jail, Roger Williams is hunted out of the commonwealth of Massachusetts. The fine and sensitive soul of Frederick Robertson is pierced through and through. Bushnell stands pilloried before a Connecticut consociation, Beecher before a Congregational Council and Phillips Brooks before a synod of the church.

In the light of history, both Church and world stand equally condemned for their false judgments and mistaken verdicts. By divine right of kings and by infallible popes and by authoritative councils, has the truth been denied, its prophets put to shame and its Saviour cruci-

fied. It is not confined to any age, or to any sect or church. Again and again have the Church's prophets become the Church's martyrs and at the Church's hands.

Thus have the sowers sown their seed in rocky places. Prophet after prophet has arisen in an age that has asserted, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Thus has humanity either entertained its angels unawares or cast them out-of-doors into the silence of the night. Thus has the Church hugged to its bosom ancient tradition and outworn method saying, The old is good, that which has been is better than that which is and that which is to be. Blind peoples have gone on choosing blind leaders of the blind, "and unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith :

"By hearing ye shall hear and shall in no wise understand ;
And seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive :
For this people's heart is waxed gross,
And their ears are dull of hearing
And their eyes they have closed
Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes
And hear with their ears
And understand with their heart."

History tells many of its lessons in dark pictures. But in the face of these sad but undeniable witnesses what have we to say of progress? If this be the repeated verdict of history from

the Israel of Isaiah to the Israel of Jesus Christ, and from the Christianity of Jesus Christ to the Christianity of to-day, what is to become of the race that kills its prophets and stones those sent unto her? Is not this a hopeless world?

For our answer let us turn again to the attitude of Jesus. To-day He overlooks the city and bitterly laments. And yet to-morrow we hear His confident voice ring out through the corridors of the high priest's hall, "Before this generation pass away, ye shall see the Son of Man coming in glory and power." What is the ground of this sublime assurance?

Likewise if we turn again to the pages of the prophets we find alternating hope. The prophet's ground of hope is that he has found in Israel a little group of souls with open ears and susceptible hearts and willing minds. Every prophet had his little school. Isaiah gathers these up and calls them the "Servant of Jehovah."

So Jesus had His little band of faithful souls. He beholds from the cross a John, a Mary, a Joseph of Arimathea.

The entrance to the way of truth is straight and narrow, but still a few do find it. While the many called have deafened ears, a few are chosen. These form the connecting bridges for the transmission of truth from age to age. Here is the reality of apostolic succession. The Church that slew its unknown visitants was not the

Church. It only arrogated to itself the name. These fewer open-hearted men have been the true Church of Jesus Christ.

Through these do the rejected prophecies of one age become the truths of God to the next. Each succeeding generation has builded sepulchres to the prophets whom their fathers stoned and slew, and has said, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the prophets' blood." Thus are Sauls converted into Pauls. The stone which the builders of to-day reject becomes to-morrow the head of the corner.

The history of both Church and world reveals significant lessons here. The judgment of one day is the reversal of its predecessor's verdict. The relative judgments on Charles the First and Oliver Cromwell furnish a most striking instance. For more than two centuries the right and the greatness of the king were asserted against the alleged wrong and the falseness of the Man of Iron. Within the last half century the verdict has been universally reversed. When Plato died, the academy refused to elect Aristotle as his successor. Aristotle had to wait for an age beyond his own.

Thus has the light appeared unto one generation and been hidden by it, because it knew not the day of its visitation, but only to be uncovered by the next. One age has cast forth its prophets

in the darkness of the night for its successor to discover in the morning sun.

With the great host of mankind the cause is indifference. Most men know nothing of the signs of the time. Most churches do not. Pilate is busy with his intrigues, Herod involved in his licentious orgies, others busy with their farms and merchandise, asking no other questions than "What shall we eat and what shall we drink and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" The most priceless and immortal truths of heaven fall unheeded and unheard upon the babel of earth's petty shouts and sounds.

Within the Church too often it is a blind rejection. Jesus reverses the traditions of the elders, He upsets accustomed ideas, and makes men fear by startling them. For this the truth is resolutely shut out and its proclaimer silenced.

Thus it was with the superb commanding figure of the ages, unheeded by an age and church that knew not the day of its visitation, or the things belonging to its peace and progress. Thus in each succeeding age and church have those who reflected His ineffable light been put to shame and silence by a blind humanity and an inhospitable church.

The attitude of our times is much the same. New light is coming upon the horizon of to-day. We also have our prophets. The great mass of men within our churches are not in touch with

the world's best and highest thought. Sadder still is it that so many, when the reflections of these great souls are cast upon them, resolutely close their eyes and say without a moment's thought or reflection, "We will not that He should reign over us." Only a few years ago a relatively insignificant church heard as a candidate for its pulpit and passed by in ignorant disdain a man who to-day is recognized as one of the profoundest thinkers upon religion in America. They knew not their visitation.

These lessons of history should give us pause. For our age has its prophets. The voice of the saintly Martineau still lingers on the air. A Drummond left us but yesterday and his spirit is still here. The shadow of Phillips Brooks is on us. Let us be willing to listen to living voices. Let us be heedful how we turn our backs to the present and the future. Let us take heed that we do not hand down to our children the task of raising monuments over the graves of the prophets unheeded or rejected by their fathers. A recast of history may well allow the native hue of a rejective resolution to be sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.

One of our most significant prerogatives is our choice of leaders. Every age has its self-constituted teachers, ordained by a self-conceited ignorance, consecrated to a darkened mind, unto whom is fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus, "Ye take

away the key of knowledge. Ye enter not in yourselves and them that would enter in ye hinder." The verdict of self-repeating history sends out again the warning of the great teacher of the Christian faith who, when teaching things both new and strange, urged upon his hearers, "Take heed how ye hear."

Does this seem to be a dark and doubtful view? Must we linger with the Master weeping over a lost church? Or may we follow Him upon the morrow and hear the echo in our own souls of His triumphant note? There is this hope for our own age. The human mind, though all too slow in its awakening, has in every instance finally awakened to every truth. The decision of the Greek academy was at last reversed and Aristotle elected to his rightful place. Each succeeding age does and will build sepulchres to the prophets slain by its fathers. Let us revert again to the sublime strain of hope in every prophet's message and experience. Isaiah rejoiced in the little saving remnant, the chosen few with open ears and willing hearts who did receive, conserve, interpret and hand down the truth. The Great Master left His priceless heritage to a little handful of devoted followers. Later there was the little band of Pilgrims, fleeing to an unknown land in preservation of religious liberty.

So the prophets of our time are gathering to-

gether a few Marys and Marthas and Johns. Every Socrates has at least his Plato, and every Plato his Aristotle. These are the leaven of the age. This is the true apostolic succession of the truth. Many within the Church are called to its highest truth, and while but few are chosen, there are still a few. Some wise men have seen the star in the East and hold its glittering rays in sight that they may be guided to the cradle of truth.

The supreme prerogative of human personality is the prerogative of choice. There is no more solemn choice before the Church than the selection of its leaders. There is danger of confusion. For many say, "Lo here," and "Lo there." It is significant in our study of the period of prophecy in Israel that in every case the false prophets were those who prophesied that which the king and people wanted. The true were those who made hard, unwelcome utterances. Clear it is, at least, that a thing may not be the truth because we want to hear it. There are other and better indications that we may follow. The best of these are character and competency, seriousness and depth; these combined qualities of heart and mind. If we were to ask, What is the mark of a worthy teacher and leader of the people's thought? it could best be answered in the words of Jesus to Pilate: "To this end have I been born and to this end am I come into

the world, that I may bear witness to the truth."

I have a fervent faith not only that this world *was* in the hands of God but that it *is* in His keeping. I profoundly believe that, in its thought, it is moving onward. I must believe that as God spoke to His prophets of every other generation, so He speaks to those of our own; that as to every one of them He gave new glimpses of the truth, so He does to-day. I cannot believe that God is dead, nor can I believe that He is the God only of the dead. If the Holy Spirit spoke to men of old, so it must to men of our age, if God still be God and this be still His world.

If this be true, the attitude of all should be the attitude of listeners. It is the duty of every intelligent being to put himself in touch with the highest thought and to seek out the real prophets of his time. No process should be slower than that of rejection. For whosoever rejects the truth or is indifferent to the truth rejects Jesus Christ and is indifferent to the Son of Man. "Take heed how ye hear."

The centre of the thought of our time is upon the person of Jesus Christ. The sublime figure of history, the supreme teacher of all time, the transcendent moral ideal of the race, is under the search-light of human thought. To all this no true and intelligent follower of His can be indifferent. If it be that the prophets of our age

are discovering truths about His Gospel that have not been seen by earlier eyes and we reject them, we reject the Son of God.

It is this little remnant of earnest seekers for the ultimate realities that makes for the perpetuation of His life and truth. No school or sect confines these prophets.

The Holy Spirit is not dead. It is not withdrawn from the world of thought. It hovers over the reverent souls within the schools who search the Scriptures. It is with the deep and serious thinker in the quiet of the hour of midnight oil. Choose well the molders of your thought. It is the supreme function of the preacher of to-day to wisely choose *his* teachers and then to bring his people to their feet. Sad it is that the great mass of the Church is kept so far from the thought of the best thinkers, that so many choose blind leaders.

If there be those of our day who would themselves not enter in, at least let them heed how they take away the key of knowledge and hinder those who would. The Spirit of God is moving upon the waters of contemporary thought. The vision of truth has not come only to the past. There is truth and glory in the things that were; there is more of truth and glory in the things that are; there will be greater truth and glory in the things that are to be. God is not only the God of the past that is dead but of the present

that lives and moves and has its being in His eternal life. Take heed, take heed, lest the visitation come and go and be unknown.

Thus the voice of the people is the voice of God only when the people hear and echo the messages of the great prophets of the Spirit.

Bring Jesus into the life of the world to-day, to His own world of which He has been for two thousand years the moral creator, to His own Church, and men would call His sayings "hard sayings." He would speak to deaf ears, He would look into doubtful countenances, He would find fainting hearts. This would be the answer to His own question, "When the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?"

His message would be too great for the small minds of men. Yea, His voice does speak, but men are refusing to hear Him. Thus the world is easily misled by fraud and pretense. Still more are good men and women willing to listen to him who gives them the easy task; they can appreciate the calculating voice, understand shallow personalities and readily appropriate little ideals.

But the really great message deafens them; a great burst of truth is blinding. Therefore the prophet's voice to-day is often lost upon the chilly atmosphere. Or, men and women are willing to wave palm branches for the Master to-day, but not to follow Him to Calvary to-morrow.

The lesson is this. The Church of Christ to-day is hearing a new message, is facing a new mission. She does not yet see it; her face is largely towards the past. But she too has her chosen few, whose vision is becoming large enough, whose spirit brave enough, to save her from her own blind, sluggish self. There are those who witness this day of her visitation; they will hold the torch of truth until another generation shall fulfill, to-morrow, the vision of her prophets of to-day.

XVI

THE EVERLASTING REALITY OF RELIGION

THE title of this chapter is the phrase of a great scientist, one who was a reverent worshipper as well as a profound thinker. It is simply the echo of the words of Simon Peter, when the Master asked His disciples if they were to forsake Him. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

In the religion of Jesus we find the sense of finality, of ultimate reality, and thus of last resort. The knowledge, the sense and the reality of the infinite lie behind our moral universe. Human life, without this consciousness, is vain and void. In the last analysis it is without meaning and interpretation, unless with the psalmist we can say, "In Thy light do we see light." This comes to us often as the sense of a great necessity. In the case of Simon Peter, he had become conscious that Jesus had become an absolute necessity to the life of the disciples.

How often we find this to be true of the master spirits who live among us, of our great prophets, of our spiritual men. We neglect them, we forget them, we do not realize that we could not

live without them, but by and by there comes some moral, spiritual crisis. Then it is that we realize the spiritual man as the lord of life, we look for one who is capable of dealing with the spirits and souls of things. Our humanity, in its relation to such spirits, is like the thoughtless, wayward son and the patient father.

There is no substitute for religion. We cannot live in the human without the assurance of the divine. Religion is not a mere epoch in the upward rise of man. It is an everlasting reality. We may outgrow religions but not religion. We may outgrow our faiths, but not our faith.

It is not easy to define religion; it is evasive because it is so all pervading. It is the life of God in the soul of man, the sense of the divine guiding the human, the consciousness of the spiritual meaning and reality of life. It is the realization that above us, beyond us, and yet about us, there is a spiritual order in which we live and move and have our being.

Religion itself is essentially changeless, abiding. It is not subject to the processes of substitution. Theology, the Bible, the Gospel itself, these are expressions of religion, these are ever changing, but each change is merely a new return to religion.

Man is by nature religious. It is not something unnatural and abnormal. The sovereign action of the universe upon man is the appeal of

the infinite affection to conscience, love and faith. The supremely surpassing reaction of the human soul upon the universe is its response to this infinite appeal. Prayer is one of the most natural attitudes of the human spirit. Take the life of Jesus as the revelation of our human nature at its highest and its best. His life breathes religion. His personal influence is religion.

There are many reasons why religion is an everlasting reality. It comprehends the ideal. It is true that we try to live without ideals, but we also realize that such lives are failures. Religion is the comprehension of moral ideals. In proportion as we rise above the actual to the ideal, in any sphere of life, we blend the human and the divine. Religion then will not be gone, so long as moral and spiritual ideals remain.

The religious sense is an everlasting reality because it is also the sum of all our motives. Behind and beyond all that we say or do are the great truths we believe, the lofty consecrations we make, the impulse of our actions. Back of all effects are the moral causes in our souls. The background of all the incidents of life is the great principle of living. When we are at our moral heights we are asking, Are my thoughts pure, my motives unselfish, my purpose lofty? Religion is another name for the reality of sincerity.

Religion is an everlasting reality, because it is the interpreter of life. Our commonest human

living is radiant with invisible, ideal beauty. Take anything—motherhood, wifehood. When we come to idealize, we discover that these associations are fraught with divine and holy meaning. Religion is the sense, the consciousness of this meaning, the final interpreter of human life.

No human problem receives its satisfactory answer except by the light of the divine. As the psalmist put it: "Not until I went into the sanctuary of God did I understand." Human life is clear, without any need of interpretation, to only two classes of human beings. First to those who do not think at all and second, to those who think reverently and deeply. To those in between, it is full of moral difficulties. Science may find some understanding of God through man and nature, but it can never fully understand man except by its knowledge of the Infinite. Light and understanding come to us not only from our knowledge of the things beneath us; it must also shine down upon us. Religion is the only final explanation and interpretation of the universal human order.

Some substitutes have been proposed for religion, as, for example, morals. But morality exists only in the realm of motive. The two saddest things in human life are the separation of religion from ethics and the separation of ethics from religion. The relation between the two is that of cause and effect. Morality is obedience

to law, but we know that all human law is imperfect, except as it is the law of God. Religion and morality are one and inseparable now and forever. When the divine sanction is gone, moral obligation inevitably follows. Such is not only the verdict of philosophy, but the story of human history.

The true relation between religion and morals is that of inspiration and action, vision and service, holy thinking and godly living. Thus the one cannot live without the other. In a well-ordered life the deeper man's experiences become in the realm of the temporal the profounder is his faith in the eternal. Deep calleth unto deep. The more we love God, the more we shall love our fellow men. The more that we love truth the truer we shall be. The more we feel the divine, the more do we become truly human.

Thus man comes to himself and realizes himself in religion. Not until he cries, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts," does he search and feel and know himself. The secret place of the Most High is the inmost soul of man. Not until we find God do we find ourselves. The deepest in us is the reflection of the Infinite. All our better loves, our higher aspirations, are the answers of our nature to the spirit of the Eternal.

How deeply Jesus felt it, this truth that within our spiritual natures our personalities of earth

and heaven might inextricably twine and indissolubly blend. "Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee." This is another definition of religion and another revelation of its everlasting reality. In all these relations we find religion to be the very heart of things.

Another reason that religion will never die is because man's interests are eternal. There are the experiences of suffering and sorrow, the bearing of the heavy burdens of life. They come some time to all of us. In these hours, if in no others, when we face life and look within ourselves, we cry with Peter, "To whom shall we go?"

Is there then any power beside religion to bring life up to its highest and best? Is there any substitute for it? Is not religion life itself? Have we no human limitations? Must not the finite reach out to the Infinite for its living and being?

If our life is to have length, must it not stretch outward? If it is to have height, must it not reach upward? If it is to have depth, must it not be deeper than itself? If religion is the sum of all ideals and motives, the background and the interpretation, the cause of which morality is the effect, if it is our true self-realization, if man's needs are infinite, are not men very shallow who talk to-day of the passing of religion?

Perhaps, we are saying, this is a broad and unusual definition of religion. This has nothing to do with church religion, or with religious

institutions. May not these pass away? Let us look at this for a moment.

In the history of Israel we find a certain essential relation between the sacred temple of Jerusalem and the religious life of the nation. In proportion as they were removed from the central sanctuary, they lost their spiritual integrity. It is true that the school is not education. The boy in the class room at college might learn his lessons in his own room. It is equally true that the church is not religion. But under human associations, there is a reality between form and spirit, between institutions and culture. It is true that some men who never go to college are better educated than some who do. It is true that there are many people in the church not so religious as those without. But let us not deceive ourselves by the "unsupported therefore," by generalizing from the particular. The simple facts are that a waning church means a loss in religious influence. It is true that forms and expressions have no value without life. Is it not equally true that life expresses itself through forms? At any rate, for most of us, there is some relation between the two. We should not expect literature to flourish without its school. We recognize that art is largely dependent upon its galleries. Imagine, if you can, a city with no church. How long would it be the habitation of religion?

Our day and generation is one of sad neglect, but the world will come back. Our world of to-day, more than anything else, is restless, and it will come to say with Augustine, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our souls are restless until they find their rest in Thee."

Many a time have I seen a little child surrounded by his toys. So interested is he in them that for the time he forgets the mother and feels no need of her. But I know that by and by the toys, one by one, will be cast aside, and he will turn to his mother. Thus

> "We older children grope our way,
> From dark behind to dark before,
> And only when our hands we lay,
> Dear Lord, in Thine, the night is day."

If thus we face the world thoughtfully and then we face the Master who is the sovereign revelation of religion, we shall ask with Peter, "To whom shall we go?"

> "Here let us pause, our quest forego,
> Enough for us to feel and know
> That He in whom the cause and end,
> The past and future meet and blend,
> Speaks not alone the words of fate
> Which worlds destroy and worlds create;
> But whispers in my spirit's ear
> In tones of love, or warning fear,
> A language none beside may hear.
> To Him from wanderings long and wild
> I come, an overwearied child."

"He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

"And when it was day . . . He came down . . . and stood in the plain . . . there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all."

Thus, with the Master, he who does the work of an unselfish ministry in the daylight hours must find his way back, at eventide, to the sources of his refuge and his strength; there is no lasting, perfected social service without its commensurate spiritual culture, and the one will be as real and abiding as the other is deep and reverent.

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